BBC

PLAYING THE MEDIEVAL FOOL

# HISTORY REVEALED

YOUR ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO

# THE EDWARDIANS

## Uncover the hidden side of Britain's gilded age – from strikes to suffragettes

HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT ROMAN WOMEN?

**PLUS** How old is Mother Nature? What was the Habsburg jaw?

9 772632 693042 11>
ISSUE 111 / SEPTEMBER 2022 / £5.50

WAR THUNDER
New? GET YOUR FREE BONUS
BECOME A PILOT YOURSELF!
WARTHUNDER.COM/FLY
Windows
STEAM
Mac
oculus
VIVE
PS4
XBOX ONE
PS5
XBOX SERIES X|S
Gaijin
12
www.pegi.info

# WELCOME SEPTEMBER 2022

The Edwardian period may have been a gilded age for some, but many Britons still lived modest lives. Learn more in this month's Essential Guide, which begins on page 31

For many people, the Edwardian period conjures up images of elegantly clad women taking tea on the lawn – the stuff of historical dramas like *Downton Abbey*. But **look beneath the genteel facade and you will find an era of great uncertainty**, a time when Britain's sphere of influence was beginning to wane and working-class people were starting to assert themselves through trade unions and labour strikes. In this month's Essential Guide, **we explore what it was like to live in Britain during this time of change**, investigating the inventions and innovations that ushered in the modern world, while also taking a closer look at the experiences of women and people of colour. Turn to page 31 to get started.

Elsewhere, we tell **the extraordinary story of Robert Smalls, the escaped slave who became an American Civil War hero** and ultimately served five terms in the US House of Representatives (*page 57*), and consider how the 20th century would have panned out had Archduke Franz Ferdinand not been murdered in August 1914 (*page 70*). And **we share six fascinating facts about the lives of Roman women** – from beauty regimes to breastfeeding (*page 28*).

Also this month, we examine the Great Tea Race of 1866 (*page 16*), **analyse one of Norwegian artist Edvard Munch's most pivotal paintings** (*page 62*), and look at the history and significance of the Benin Bronzes (*page 21*).

See you next month!

**Charlotte Hodgman**
Editor

## THIS MONTH'S BIG NUMBERS

**1.1m**
The number of people who were born in England in 1908

**56**
The number of gold medals won by Britain at the 1908 Summer Olympics in London

**>10,000**
The number of decorative pieces that make up the Benin Bronzes

## GET INVOLVED

### FIND US ONLINE
Visit our online home, ***historyextra.com***, for a wealth of exciting content on British and world history, as well as an extensive archive of magazine content from *BBC History Revealed* and our sister publication *BBC History Magazine*.

### HISTORYEXTRA PODCAST
Download episodes for free from iTunes and other providers, or via *historyextra.com/podcast*

### CONTACT US
**facebook.com/HistoryExtra**
**twitter.com/HistoryExtra**
**@HistoryExtra**

**EMAIL US:** haveyoursay@historyrevealed.com
**OR POST:** Have Your Say, *BBC History Revealed*, Immediate Media, Eagle House, Colston Avenue, Bristol, BS1 4ST
**EDITORIAL ENQUIRIES:** 0117 927 9009

### SUBSCRIPTION ENQUIRIES:
**PHONE:** 03330 162 116
**EMAIL:** historyrevealed@buysubscriptions.com
**POST:** *BBC History Revealed*, PO Box 3320, 3 Queensbridge, Northampton, NN4 7BF
**OVERSEAS:** In the US/Canada you can contact us at: Immediate Media, PO Box 401, Williamsport, PA 17703, USA
*immediatemedia@buysubscriptions.com*
Toll free 888 941 5623

### GET YOUR DIGITAL COPY
Digital versions of *BBC History Revealed* are available for iOS, Kindle Fire, PC and Mac. Visit iTunes, Amazon or *zinio.com* to find out more.

**USPS Identification Statement**
***BBC History Revealed*** (ISSN 2632-6930) (USPS 022-450) September 2022 is published 13 times a year (monthly, with a Christmas issue in December) by Immediate Media Company London Limited, Vineyard House, 44 Brook Green, Hammersmith, London, W6 7BT, UK. Distributed in the US by NPS Media Group, 2 Enterprise Drive, Suite 420, Shelton, CT 06484. Periodicals postage paid at Shelton, CT and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to *BBC History Revealed*, PO Box 401, Williamsport, PA 17703, USA

ON THE COVER: GETTY IMAGES X9, ALAMY X3 ON THIS PAGE: GETTY X1, JENI NOTT X1

# CONTENTS SEPTEMBER 2022

## YOUR ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO THE EDWARDIANS


**32 The dawn of a new century**
An overview of the Edwardian era's major milestones

**34 Everything you wanted to know about the Edwardians**
Dr John Jacob Woolf answers our key questions

**38 Moving with the times**
While a rigid class system still remained, Edwardian daily life was paved with new opportunities

**42 Lords, leaders and luminaries**
Meet the famous figures who captured the headlines

**45 King Edward VII: a man of the ages**
Inside the life of the man for whom the era is named

**46 Breaking the glass ceiling**
How Edwardian women shattered social mores

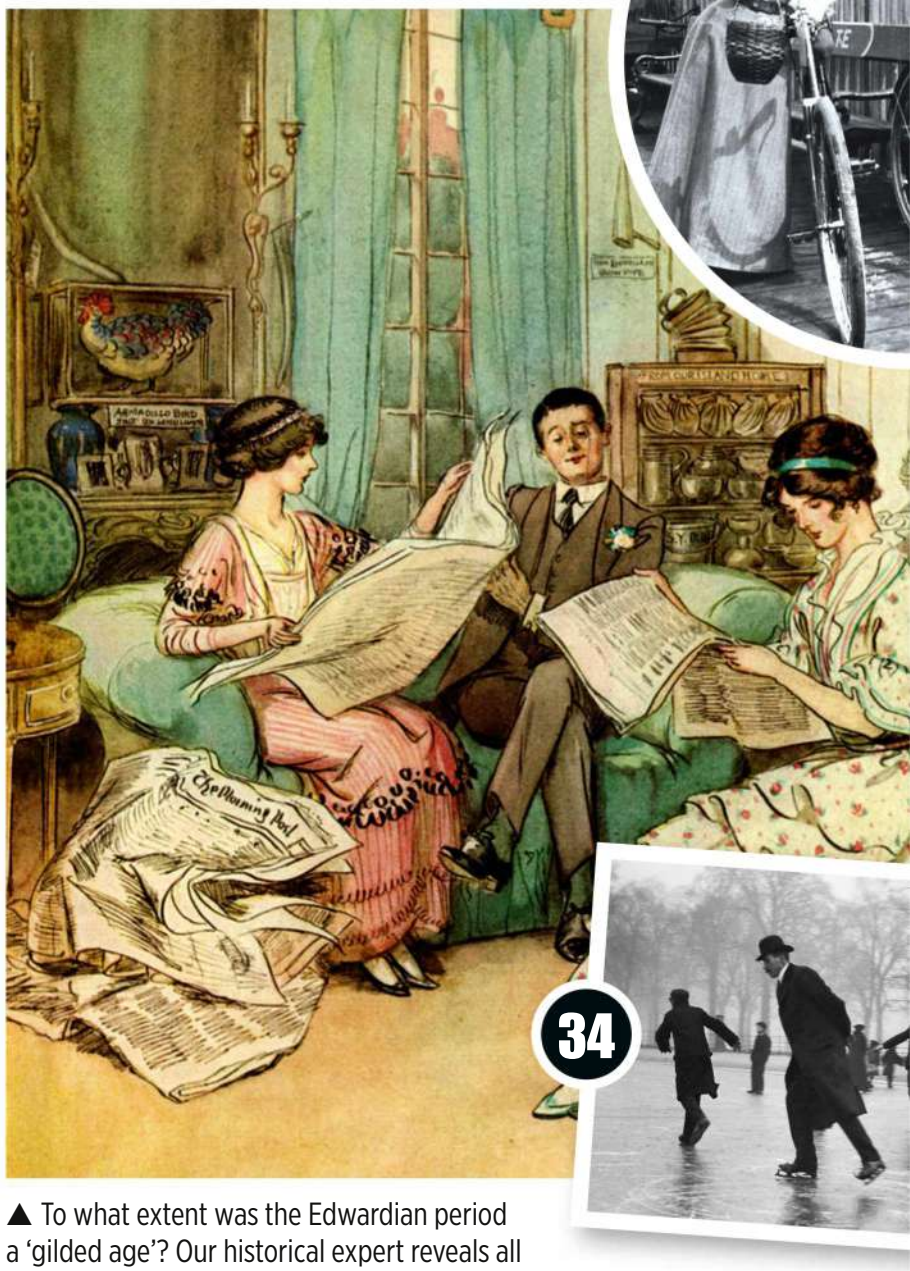
**48 A snapshot in time: 1908**
What sort of world would you encounter if you were to travel back in time to a random year in Edwardian Britain?

**50 Forgotten contributions**
The hidden lives of black Britons during the 1900s

**52 Workers at war**
Discover the story behind the Great Unrest of 1911–14

**54 Opinion**
Dr John Jacob Woolf discusses the relevance of the era today

**55 Get hooked**
Take the topic further with our pick of books, TV and more


▲ To what extent was the Edwardian period a 'gilded age'? Our historical expert reveals all

# FEATURES

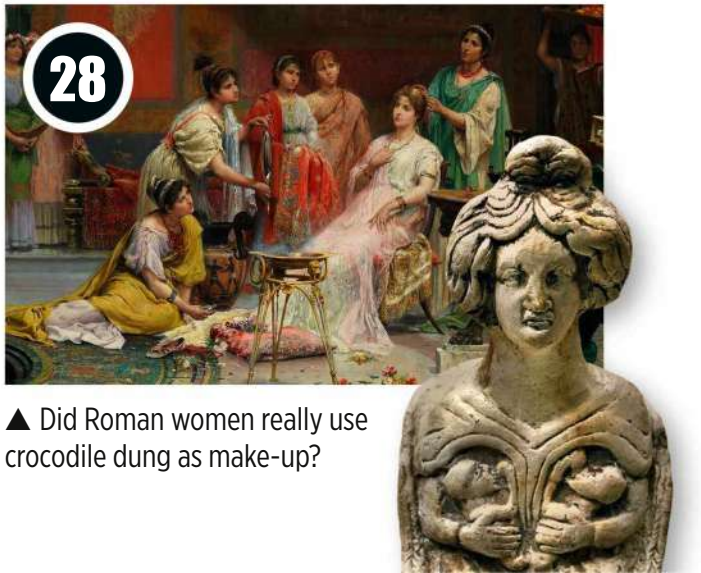

**28 6 things you (probably) didn't know about Roman women**
What was life like for the wives and daughters of the Roman empire?

**57 The slave who stole a ship and sailed to freedom**
We tell the story of Robert Smalls: an enslaved man who broke free from bondage and became a war hero

**62 Great Paintings: Evening on Karl Johan Street**
The secrets behind a Munch classic

**64 Court jesters**
Discover the hidden lives of the entertainers who served royalty

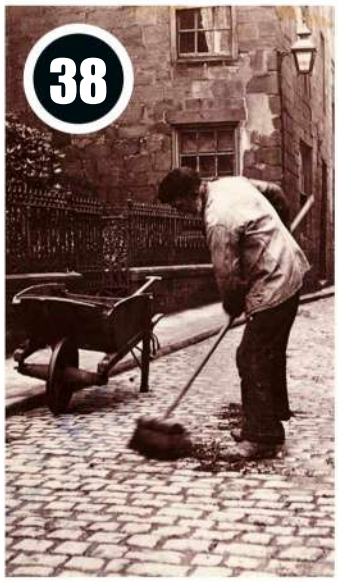
**70 What if... Archduke Franz Ferdinand hadn't been assassinated?**


▲ Did Roman women really use crocodile dung as make-up?

GETTY IMAGES X9, ALAMY X3

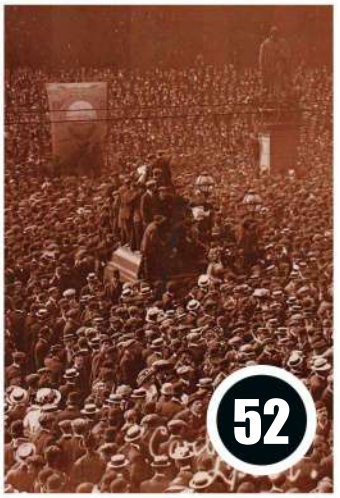
46 ◀ Why the Edwardian era was a time of profound change for women



38 ▲ Discover what daily life was like for ordinary Britons

45 ▲ Inside King Edward VII's appetite for extravagance

42 ▲ Meet the figures who defined Edwardian Britain



52 ▲ Why did thousands of workers go on strike in 1911?

57 ▲ How a South Carolina man pulled off one of history's greatest-ever escapes

64 ▲ Why playing the fool in medieval England was certainly no easy feat

# EVERY MONTH


**6 Snapshots**
A dog with a very special role, and more

**12 What We've Learned This Month**
Tortoise remains found at Pompeii, and more

**14 My Life in History**
Amanda Hart, manager at the Roman Baths and Pump Room

**16 This Month in... 1866**
The Great Tea Race reaches its conclusion

**19 Paranormal Cold Case**
Danny Robins discusses historical 'timeslips'

**21 In a Nutshell**
The Benin Bronzes explained

**24 Spotlight on... Countess Constance Markievicz**

**73 Q&A**
Who invented chocolate chip cookies? This, and other historical questions answered

**79 TV, Film & Radio**
This month's history entertainment

**82 What's On**
Exhibitions and events in the world of history

**84 Books & Podcasts**
The latest historical releases and podcasts

**86 Historical Fiction**
Historian Dan Jones discusses his first novel, set during the Hundred Years' War

**87 Prize Crossword**

**88 Letters**

**89 Next Issue**

**90 Photo Finish**

LIKE IT? SUBSCRIBE!
TRY 3 ISSUES FOR JUST £5

26

SNAPSHOTS

# 1970 PRINCIPAL TO THE PARENTS' OFFICE

"Who's going to run this school – black students, white students, or you?" berates one mother to the principal, as other parents and some students look on. George Washington High School in Manhattan, New York, had been closed for two days due to disturbances, triggered by the rejection of a parents' request for a complaint desk to be set up in the lobby, according to *The New York Times*. It was a time of social unrest in the country, be it against the Vietnam War or ongoing, in many cases worsening, racial tensions, such as the process of integrating schools.

GETTY IMAGES

SNAPSHOTS

# 1935
# SEA OF LIGHTS

Anyone afra d of he ghts need not app y for th s job: attach ng thousands of bu bs to the outs de of B ackpoo Tower n preparat on for the annua um nat ons. As we as the 158-metre andmark, the ent re promenade was to be bathed n the g ow of 300,000 e ectr c ghts, transform ng the seas de town n Lancash re, reports Pathé News, nto an " mmense mag c fa ry and by n ght". It was qu te the d fference from the naugura um nat ons n 1879, wh ch had been a few months before Thomas Ed son had even got h s patent for the ght bu b. That year, the ght show cons sted of just e ght arc amps, but at east gett ng them ready wou d have been a far safer job.

GETTY IMAGES

SNAPSHOTS

# 1963
# EVERY DOG HAS ITS SCHOOL DAY

Well, someone looks ready for the start of a new term at St Agnes Church of England Primary School in Oldham, but perhaps Mrs Collier wishes more of her human pupils were as keen as Brandy, the golden retriever. The beloved pet of four-year-old Sally Ann Smith – the girl in a white dress and with an amazed expression – Brandy was used to following her everywhere, but for the last week she had been disappearing during the day. Missing his playmate, Brandy had therefore decided to enrol, unofficially, at school in order to stay by Sally Ann's side.

GETTY IMAGES

# THINGS WE LEARNED THIS MONTH

RECENT HISTORY HEADLINES THAT CAUGHT OUR EYE

MAIN: **Archaeologists were working in an area of Pompeii damaged by an earthquake in AD 62 when they found the shelled casualty**

BOTTOM LEFT: **The pregnant tortoise was found covered in ash from the AD 79 eruption**

BOTTOM RIGHT: **Experts think the creature may have been trying to find a comfortable place to lay her egg**

## REMAINS OF 2,000-YEAR-OLD PREGNANT TORTOISE UNEARTHED AT POMPEII

One of the smallest casualties of the AD 79 eruption of Mount Vesuvius has been found by experts working at the ancient city of Pompeii: a pregnant tortoise. The remains of the 14cm long animal and her egg were covered in volcanic ash and in the ruins of a home that had been damaged when an earthquake rocked the region 17 years earlier. It's thought that the Hermann's tortoise may have been trying to find a safe place in which to give birth when the volcano erupted, destroying Pompeii and neighbouring Herculaneum.

COURTESY OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL PARK OF POMPEII X3, GETTY X1, ALAMY X1, BOURNEMOUTH UNIVERSITY X3, CHRIS HALL X2

RIGHT: **Test digs at the High Hunsley site in April uncovered pottery from the 12th century**

FAR RIGHT: **Surveys have revealed more than a dozen stone houses and a large building that may have been a church**

## EXPERTS BID TO CRACK WATERLOO BODIES MYSTERY

It's a grisly theory: the bodies of some of the men and animals killed at the battle of Waterloo in 1815 were collected, ground up and turned into fertiliser. While outlandish, the suggestion appeared in newspapers at the time and, indeed, finding a full skeleton is rare. Now, however, an archaeological survey of the battlefield, in present day Belgium (marked by the Lion's Mound monument, below), is set to take place to determine the truth of the claim, as well as how widespread the practice may have been.

## YORKSHIRE HAMLET YIELDS FRESH CLUES IN SEARCH FOR MEDIEVAL VILLAGE

Archaeologists hunting for one of Britain's "best preserved, deserted medieval villages" have an enticing lead after surveys of a site in East Yorkshire revealed more than a dozen stone structures. The buildings, in what's now the hamlet of High Hunsley, are thought to have included houses and a church. Pottery found nearby dates to the 12th century, although it is possible the settlement may have existed as early as the fifth or sixth. Research suggests it may have been abandoned in around 1820. A new dig may shed light on the village's roots and why its residents left.

## IRON AGE SKELETONS FOUND AT 'DUROPOLIS' DIG IN DORSET

The remains of five members of a pre Roman tribe have been discovered on farmland near Poole, Dorset. The 2,000 year old skeletons were found in oval pits in a crouched position, along with an array of grave goods such as food and drink for the journey to the afterlife. The Iron Age Durotriges tribe is thought to have occupied the area in the first century BC, when the settlement, dubbed 'Duropolis' by the Bournemouth University archaeologists, would have covered an area of nearly 10 acres and been home to hundreds of people.

# £8,500

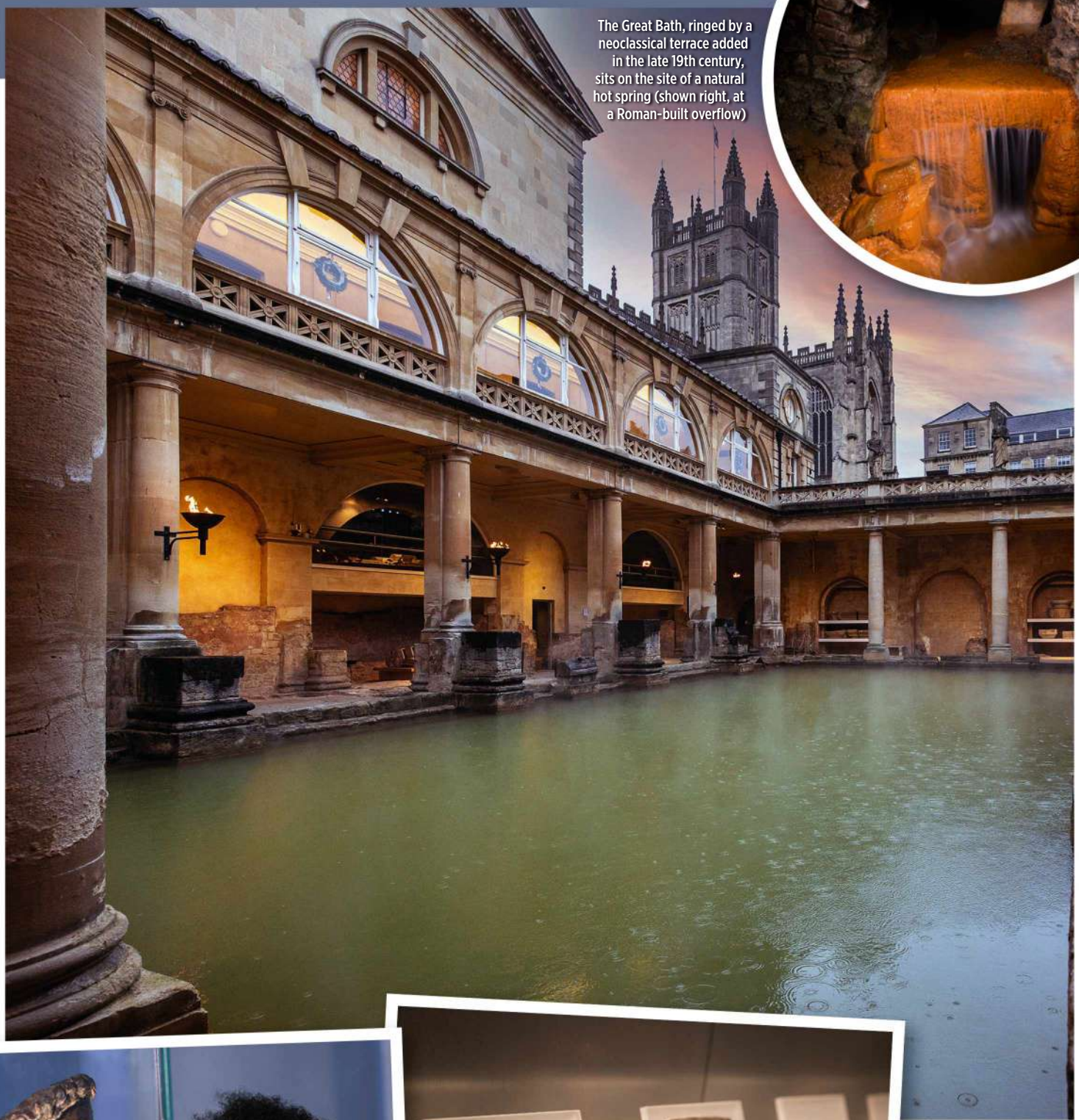
The price paid at auction for a collection of Crimean War artefacts, including medals and a diary chronicling the experiences of a British soldier in the Charge of the Light Brigade in 1854

## CONSTRUCTION OF AUTHENTIC VIKING VILLAGE CAN BEGIN ON THE ISLE OF MAN

Visitors to the Isle of Man will be able to experience the island's Viking past first hand after plans to create an authentic replica village were given the green light. The project, first devised by local Chris Hall in 2012, will see land in Sandygate transformed into a settlement complete with a forge, longhouse, temple and barn. As well as hosting battle re enactments and workshops in traditional Norse crafts, the site will chart the history of Viking traders and settlers on the Isle of Man following their arrival in the ninth century AD.

MAIN: **A scale model of the longhouse intended to be a centrepiece of the Viking settlement on the Isle of Man**

LEFT: **The interior of the longhouse, made by project founder Chris Hall**



The Great Bath, ringed by a neoclassical terrace added in the late 19th century, sits on the site of a natural hot spring (shown right, at a Roman-built overflow)

THE ROMAN BATHS, ANNA BARCLAY, JON CRAIG

LEFT: Some of the Roman Baths' 130 curse tablets, Amanda's favourite objects. The sheets of lead or pewter were inscribed with pleas asking the goddess Sulis Minerva to exact revenge on the people who had wronged them

FAR LEFT: A young visitor comes face-to-face with the sole surviving fragment of a gilt bronze sculpture depicting the goddess

# Manager at the Roman Baths and Pump Room

Amanda Hart

**HOW DID YOU FIRST GET INTERESTED IN HISTORY, ESPECIALLY ARCHAEOLOGY?**

I have always been fascinated with archaeology and there have been a number of key moments in my life that have shaped my desire to work in museums from visiting my first one, to finding items during archaeological excavations. There is just something about ancient objects and making the connection with past societies that I find utterly captivating.

It was studying archaeology at university and specialising in archaeological curatorship in my further studies that set me off on my career path. I focused on museum education for many years, developing workshops for schools and community groups. Learning and participation is highly important to me and, I believe, should be part of a museum's core purpose.

**WHAT LED YOU TO THE ROMAN BATHS AND PUMP ROOM?**

I previously worked as director of the Corinium Museum in Cirencester [which has a collection mainly consisting of Romano British artefacts, but also includes a wide array of objects spanning prehistoric to Victorian times]. There, I led a major project to create new prehistory galleries, along with a new discovery centre, garden, shop and reception area. Following the transformation of the Corinium Museum, it felt like the right time to move on, and I began my new role at the Roman Baths in 2022. There are several similarities between the two places, so it seemed like a natural progression.

**WHAT DOES YOUR ROLE ENTAIL, AND IS THERE ANYTHING NEW YOU HOPE TO BRING?**

Within my team, I am responsible for the day to day running of the site, as well as management of the collections, learning and community engagement, and the visitor experience. The Roman Baths uses a variety of methods to engage visitors, including a comprehensive audio guide and several holographic projections that really bring its history to life.

Being new to the post, I am currently reviewing the interpretation across the site. I believe there are some new and relevant narratives in the story of the Roman Baths that need to be told: around identity, migration, multiculturalism, health and disability, to name a few.

Amanda started her job at the Roman Baths in early 2022, and hopes to tell more of its history

> "People asked the goddess Sulis Minerva for revenge for a personal injustice, such as the theft of a cloak"

**WHAT ARE YOUR FAVOURITE ITEMS AND INSIGHTS ABOUT THE ROMAN BATHS?**

As I have a condition called lupus, which can affect my joints and mobility, I have an interest in the hot springs and how the natural mineral water has been used for healing particularly for rheumatic diseases. Medical writers in ancient Rome, such as Celsus and Galen, attest to the curative properties of bathing, while the Pump Room, which was built in the 18th century, became a fashionable place to drink the mineral water for health reasons.

My favourite objects are the curse tablets: prayers of Romano British people asking the goddess Sulis Minerva for revenge for an injustice done to them. The messages usually related to something personal, such as the theft of everyday items like a cloak or gloves. They were scratched into lead or pewter squares, folded or rolled up, and then thrown into the hot spring where the spirit of Sulis Minerva was believed to have dwelt. It is a privilege to be able to read these prayers messages their owners probably never expected would be read 2,000 years in the future.

**IS THERE A RECOMMENDATION YOU WOULD MAKE TO VISITORS?**

The Roman Baths is an exceptional place, and unique in Roman Britain as a bathing and temple complex. Of course, visitors cannot help but be impressed by the scale and beauty of the centrepiece of the site, the Great Bath. I recommend visiting on a cold and sunny morning to see the steam rising off the water. It makes for a magical experience you can almost feel Sulis Minerva's presence.

**WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO SOMEONE WHO WANTS TO FOLLOW A SIMILAR CAREER ROUTE?**

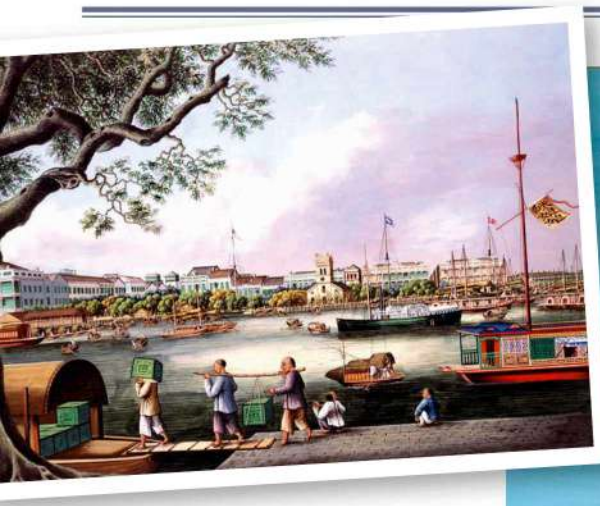
I would advise finding a course of study that suits their needs, as there are many routes into museums these days. It is important to get experience of the different functions of a museum (such as retail, marketing, community engagement, exhibitions, collections and events), and see how these interact with each other to make a memorable visitor experience.

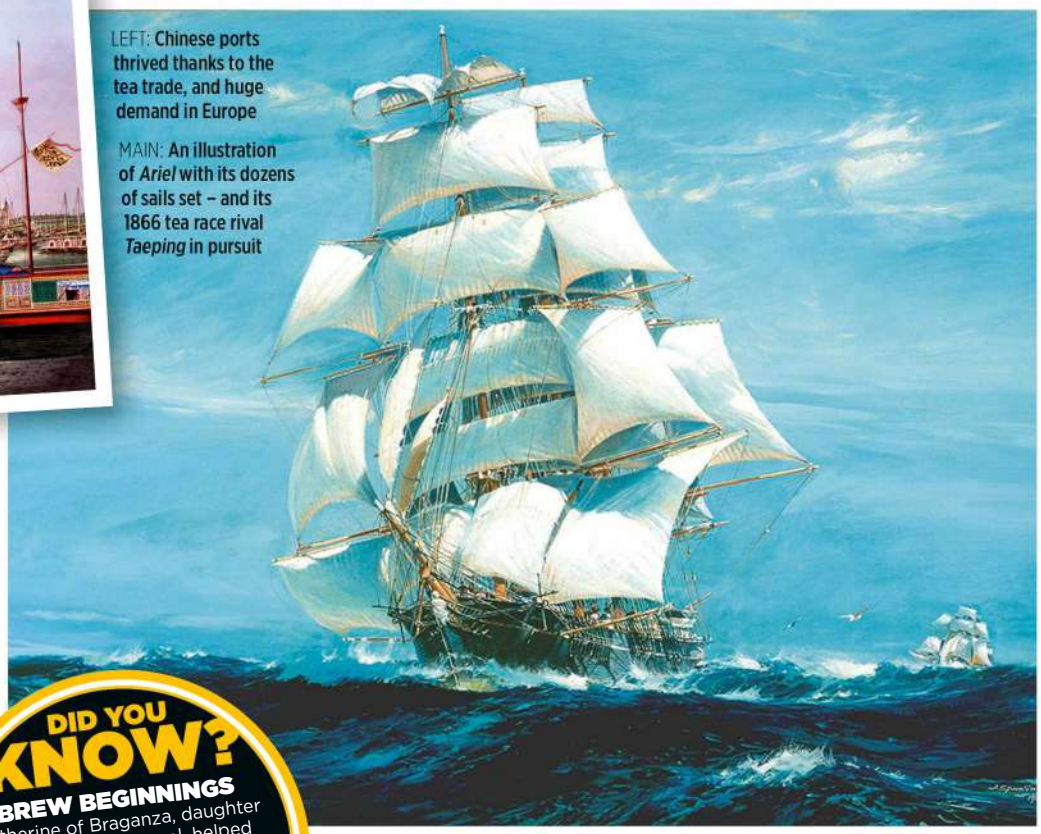
I'd also recommend they join a museum sector network to keep informed of the latest news and events there's so much information available virtually, from podcasts and e newsletters to online conferences. The most fun advice I'd give, however, is to go and see lots of exhibitions and museums in person. It's great inspiration!

**AMANDA HART** is the manager of the Roman Baths and Pump Room in Bath, Somerset. Built on the site of a hot spring, the baths were in use throughout the centuries of Roman rule in Britain. Today, the Georgian-era Pump Room is a restaurant where visitors can sample the water. Learn more at *romanbaths.co.uk*

# The Great Tea Race comes to a thrilling end

Words: Emma Slattery Williams





LEFT: Chinese ports thrived thanks to the tea trade, and huge demand in Europe

MAIN: An illustration of *Ariel* with its dozens of sails set – and its 1866 tea race rival *Taeping* in pursuit

Captain John Keay desperately waited for a tugboat to take his ship, the high speed clipper *Ariel*, up the Thames and into dock at London. Victory in that year's tea race, and the prize money that went with it, was within his grasp, but a rival had been in sight not far behind for hours now. Even after 99 days at sea and nearly 16,000 nautical miles, the winner was going to be determined by mere minutes, and good luck, on 6 September 1866.

For just over a decade, clipper captains like Keay had competed in an unofficial annual race: to load the first crop of tea in China and sail as quickly as possible to be the first to unload it in Britain, where thirsty tea drinkers were waiting to have their cups filled with the freshest leaves. Originally introduced to the British en masse in the mid 17th century, tea had grown into one of the nation's biggest imports by the 1800s. The hot drink was beloved at all levels of society and tea houses had proliferated, partly thanks to members of the temperance movement who encouraged the beverage as a healthy alternative to alcohol.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

**BREW BEGINNINGS**

Catherine of Braganza, daughter of John IV of Portugal, helped popularise drinking tea for pleasure instead of medicine in England. When she arrived in 1662 to marry Charles II, she brought tea leaves as it was already a common drink in her home country.

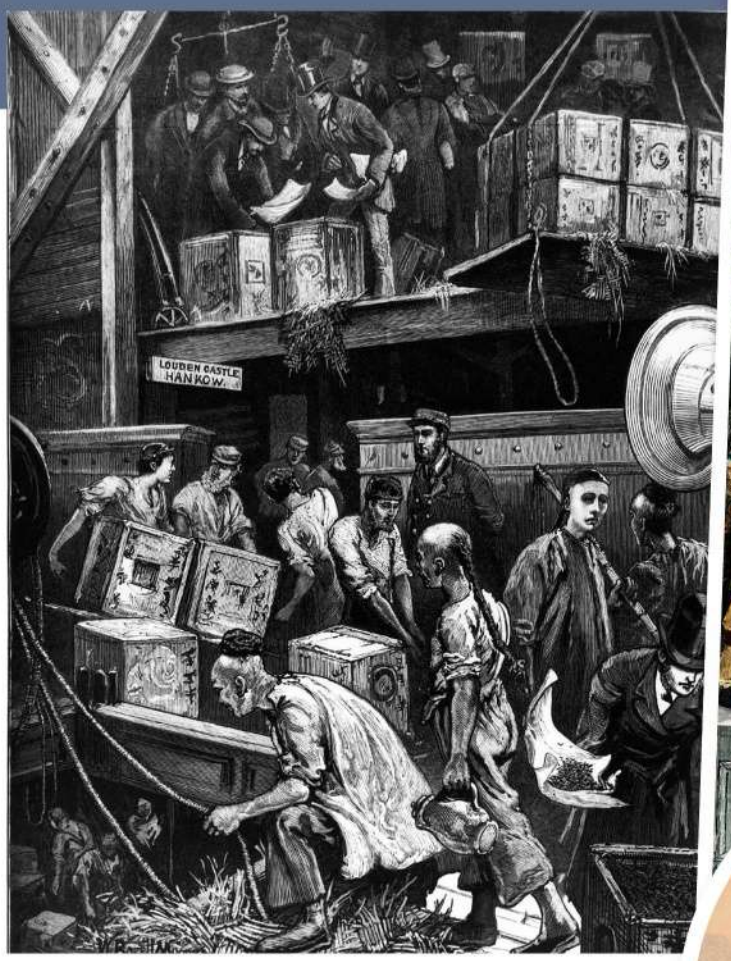
Such was the demand for tea that once the East India Company's monopoly on the trade ended in the 1830s, competition among merchants got heated. They developed and refined designs for faster ships able to handle the conditions on the voyage between Britain and China. Clippers were the elegant result. Slim, streamlined and with a huge number of sails across their three masts to catch every gust of wind, they could reach high speeds even when laden with goods, making them ideal for transporting tea (as well as the opium being sold to China).

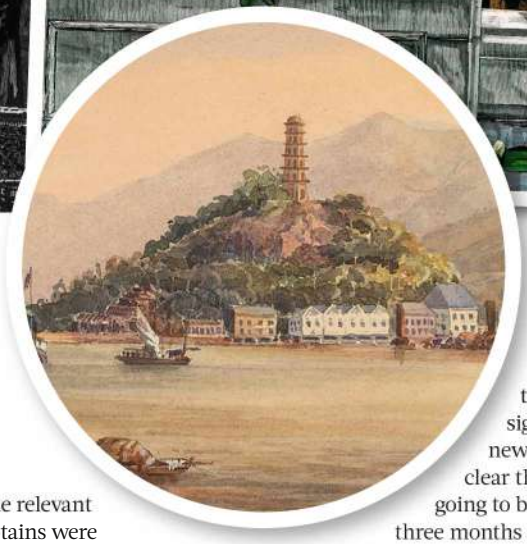
Merchants began racing their clippers to ensure their cargo would be first on the market in Britain each year. To up the ante, a financial incentive was introduced so that by the mid 1850s, the winner received a premium price of 10 shillings per tonne. There was also prestige to be won as the 'tea races' were covered in newspapers and bets made on the result.

## THE RACE IS ON

The most dramatic and closely contested race would take place in the summer of 1866. Of the nine clippers that gathered at the Pagoda Anchorage on the Min River, near Foochow (Fuzhou) in

GETTY IMAGES X1, ALAMY X4





"After three months at sea, all four clippers at the front of the race passed the Azores in the Atlantic on the same day"

southeastern China, there were five with the best chance of winning. The recently launched *Ariel*, captained by John Keay, was the fastest despite also being the heaviest able to reach 16 knots due to more than 2,400 square metres of sail canvas. But it had to contend with fellow newcomer *Taitsing*; the proven speedster *Taeping*; the 1864 winner *Serica*, which, unlike the other wood and iron framed clippers, was only built of wood and thus light; and *Fiery Cross*. Captained by Richard Robinson, the latter had won four of the last five races.

*Ariel* got the better start, loading and stowing its 12,000 tea chests overall, totalling 560,000kg the quickest and being ready to depart by the evening of 28 May. But the tugboat assigned to tow it across the river was not powerful and Keay was forced to drop anchor and wait for high tide. On the *Fiery Cross*, Robinson had been so concerned about *Ariel*'s speed that he had set off as soon as the cargo was loaded, without clearing customs or completing the relevant paperwork. The other captains were furious, but his clipper opened up a 14 hour head start. *Ariel* could not get to sea until the morning of 30 May, with *Taeping* and *Serica* close behind. The race was on.

While ship records do not reveal much about life onboard, the need to maintain speed would have made for exhausting work. The captains would have driven them hard, regardless of the weather, and the cargo would be carefully shifted to optimise weight distribution.

Just 20 days in, *Fiery Cross* left the China Sea still in the lead. From there the route went across the Indian Ocean, around the Cape of Good Hope and up Africa's western coast. Yet despite the distances covered, the clippers were occasionally so close that the crews could see each other. *Taitsing* had ended up departing a day too late to be in contention, especially as the other four made such good time. There were some days when they logged more than 300 miles. The weeks passed and the lead changed several times. With each fresh sighting and report in the newspapers, it was increasingly clear that this year's race was going to be extremely tight. After three months at sea, all four clippers passed the Azores a group of Atlantic islands west of Portugal on the same day, 29 August.

ABOVE: **An 1868 watercolour of Pagoda Anchorage – the start line of the tea race**

TOP LEFT: **Tea was a main import for Britain, with merchants racing to transport it as quickly as possible**

TOP RIGHT: **Demand for the freshest tea leaves came from both the rich and poor alike**

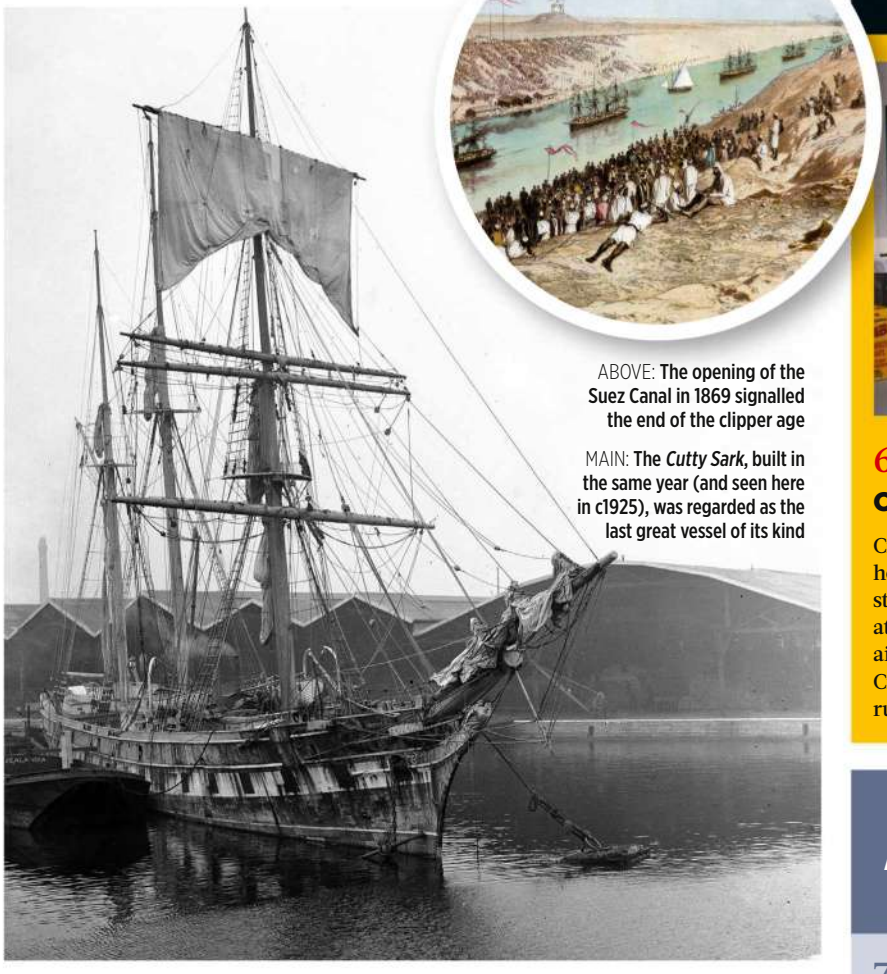
## FIERCE PURSUIT

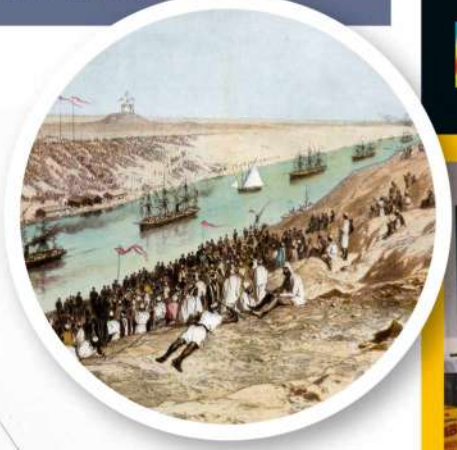
By the time England was sighted after 97 days at sea, the race could still have been won by anyone, as they approached the Channel practically in a line. At the front was *Ariel*, with *Taeping* in fierce pursuit. Throughout the day of 5 September, both logged speeds of 14 knots as they raced with all sails, aided by a strong wind. The unofficial finish line they aimed for was Deal, on the Kent coast, as that was where they had to signal for a tugboat to guide them into the Thames. It was early the next morning that *Ariel* got there, just minutes ahead of *Taeping*.

Captain Keay was thrilled, but knew the race was not finished. The clippers needed to reach their respective docks. And much like at the start of the race, ▶

# THIS MONTH... 1866

## ANNIVERSARIES THAT HAVE MADE HISTORY





ABOVE: **The opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 signalled the end of the clipper age**

MAIN: **The *Cutty Sark*, built in the same year (and seen here in c1925), was regarded as the last great vessel of its kind**

◀ *Ariel* lost out by being towed by a weak tugboat and getting caught up in low tide, and it cost Keay and his crew the victory. While *Taeping* had further to go to reach London Docks, its shallower draft and more powerful tug meant it got there at 9.47pm on 6 September just 28 minutes before *Ariel* completed its voyage at 10.15pm at East India Dock. *Serica* arrived under two hours later and *Fiery Cross*, unluckily held up by the tide, showed up on 8 September.

The race had taken 99 days, a week shorter than the previous year. No other race would be as hotly contested either. *Taeping* pipped *Ariel* to the docks, but *Ariel* had reached the point of calling in tugboats first. It was therefore agreed the prize premium would be split.

As it turned out, the 1866 thriller race was the last time the premium was given, and although the clippers performed superbly, their days were numbered. For *Taeping* and *Ariel* did not bring the first cargo of tea to Britain that year: an auxiliary steamship named *Erl King* had left China after the beginning of the race but took just 77 days to make the voyage. Soon, even new clippers could not keep up in the age of steam. In 1869 the same year the last great tea clipper, the 17 knot *Cutty Sark* launched the Suez Canal opened, slashing the journey between Asia and Europe by thousands of miles. But the route was unsuitable for the famous, and now obsolete, three masted sail ships, and while the British love of tea continued to grow, they never again went to such lengths for a cuppa as the Great Tea Race of 1866. ⊙

GETTY IMAGES X4, ALAMY X1

BBC

**EVERY MONTH THROUGHOUT 2022, WE'LL BE COMMEMORATING THE BBC'S 100TH BIRTHDAY WITH A TRIP DOWN MEMORY LANE...**

### 6 September 1986

#### CASUALTY BEGINS ITS HISTORIC RUN

Created by Jeremy Brock and Paul Unwin after both are hospitalised where they are inspired by the stories of the staff, but are concerned by what they see as a "Thatcherite attack" on the National Health Service *Casualty* begins airing. Set in the A&E department at the fictional Holby City Hospital, it goes on to become the world's longest running medical drama, with over 1,260 episodes to date.

## OTHER ANNIVERSARIES

### A LOOK BACK AT OTHER EVENTS THAT HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN SEPTEMBER THROUGHOUT HISTORY

### 7 September 1822

#### BRAZIL DECLARES ITS INDEPENDENCE

Dom Pedro, son of King John VI of Portugal, proclaims Brazil as an independent state after more than three centuries under Portuguese rule. He is frustrated at his father's government for trying to return the South American country to its colonial status. By the end of the year, he has made himself emperor, with the name Pedro I.

### 30 September 1938

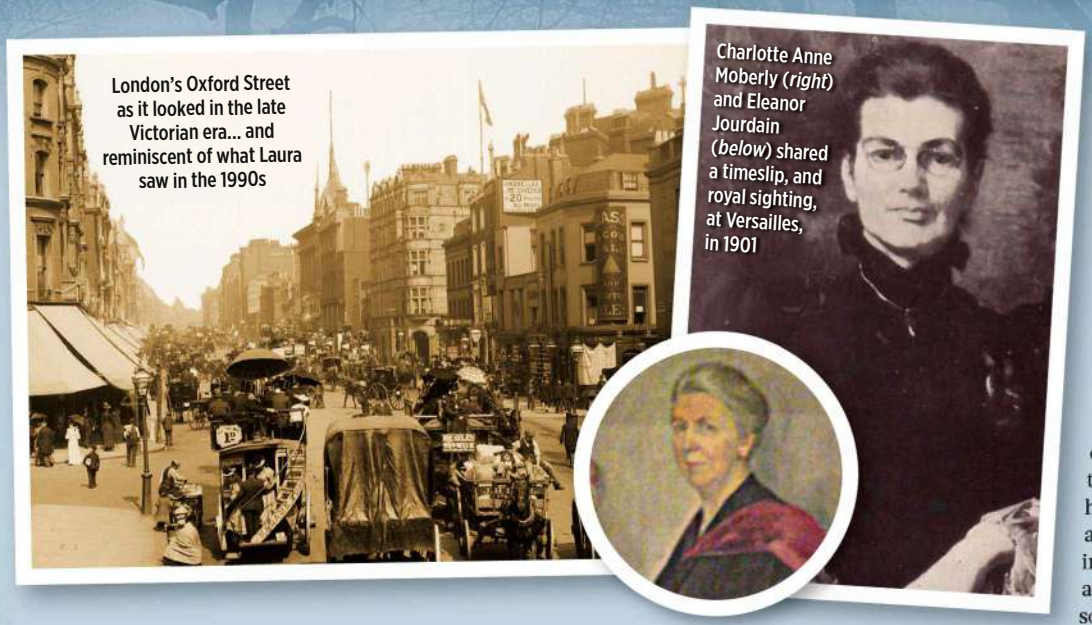
#### PEACE FOR OUR TIME?

British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain returns from Nazi Germany and, after stepping off the plane in London, announces an agreement that cedes the Sudetenland, in Czechoslovakia, to Adolf Hitler, but will avert war. He later declares the Munich Agreement as a promise of "peace for our time". This optimism is short lived as less than a year later Chamberlain declares war on Germany.

# PARANORMAL COLD CASE

INVESTIGATING HISTORY'S MOST SPINE-CHILLING ENCOUNTERS

## BBC Radio's **Danny Robins** speaks to a woman who travelled in time, entering a shop in 1993 and coming out onto a bustling street last seen a century earlier



London's Oxford Street as it looked in the late Victorian era... and reminiscent of what Laura saw in the 1990s



Charlotte Anne Moberly (*right*) and Eleanor Jourdain (*below*) shared a timeslip, and royal sighting, at Versailles, in 1901



Have you ever wanted to travel in time? Since you're reading a magazine about history, I'll hazard a guess the answer is yes. It's the stuff of childhood fantasy, but... what if it can really happen?

I've received quite a few emails about experiences that paranormal experts call 'timeslips': the sensation of briefly slipping from your current, everyday existence into a moment in the past. If we consider ghosts to be the dead returning from the past to haunt us, then timeslips are, in some ways, the reverse. We become the ghost plunged from the present into a historic situation.

One email sticks out. Laura's story took place in the autumn of 1993. She was 14 years old, living in Essex, and she and her best friend were obsessed with music. Craving 'grown up' freedoms, they'd persuade their parents to let them go into central London to buy CDs. They had a routine: Burger King for breakfast, then hours browsing the shops. One day, though, Laura's friend was unwell. "I lied to my parents," Laura says, not wanting her day to be ruined. "I was desperate to buy a particular CD and went on my own, which was forbidden."

Laura followed the normal pattern, finding herself post Burger King in the flagship HMV on Oxford Street, and this, she tells me, "is when things get interesting". As she stepped out of the music store clutching her purchases, things were not normal at all. "Instead of the usual buses, cars and people, I saw horse drawn carriages, hansom cabs, people in old fashioned dress scuttling across the road; women walking with baskets selling apples, and, I believe, a hot chestnut stall," she tells me.

### ALTERNATE REALITIES

"This was totally immersive. Instead of petrol fumes, it smelt of horses; the smell of dung and wee." It lasted about a minute, which may not sound long, but imagine feeling like you had been plunged into an alternate reality for 60 seconds it's long enough! While, on paper, it does seem impossible for a teenage girl to be transported to Victorian London, Laura is not alone. There are many accounts of similar experiences.

One of the most famous is 'The Moberly Jourdain Incident'. On 10 August 1901, two English schoolteachers, Charlotte Anne Moberly and Eleanor Jourdain, visited the Palace of Versailles near Paris. While there, they experienced a feeling of "oppression" come over them. "Everything suddenly looked unnatural" and they witnessed people wearing what they believed to be the clothes of pre-revolutionary 1700s France, and saw buildings that were no longer there.

Their most sensational claim was that they'd seen the queen, Marie Antoinette, herself. Some commentators at the time suggested they'd inadvertently wandered across a group of French socialites holding a fancy dress party, but there was enough oddness to the pair's story for it to retain a hold on the public imagination.

There have been many more stories since. There's a particular road in Liverpool, Bold Street, notorious for timeslips. In 1996, an off duty policeman shopping with his wife believed he'd been transported to the 1950s and saw all the shops transformed to how they were back then.

I'm keen to explore timeslips more in my BBC series *Uncanny*, so if you've had an experience like this, don't be shy, get in touch: *uncanny@bbc.co.uk*. I can't explain them myself yet, but Laura's words ring in my ears "It happens, Danny. It's like something in the universe shifts. We get a glimpse of life gone by."

**DANNY ROBINS** is a writer, broadcaster and journalist. He is the presenter of the BBC Radio 4 podcasts *The Battersea Poltergeist* and *Uncanny*, available now on BBC Sounds

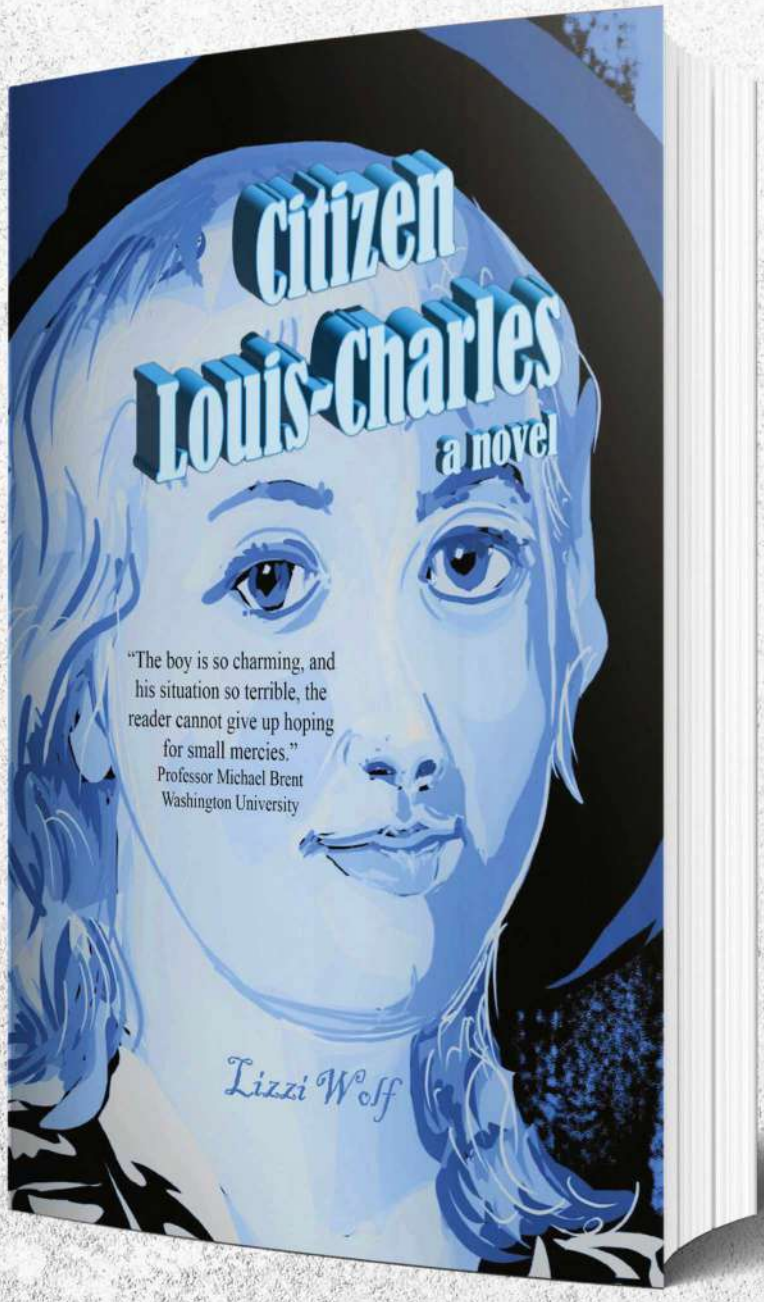
**LISTEN**

BBC SOUNDS

A special live episode of *Uncanny*, recorded at the Hay Festival 2022, is available to stream online now: *bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/p0cdvrh9*

WILLIE RUNTE X1, GETTY IMAGES X2, ALAMY X2

# France's prince in the tower!


citizen
Louis-Charles
a novel
"The boy is so charming, and his situation so terrible, the reader cannot give up hoping for small mercies."
Professor Michael Brent
Washington University
Lizzi Wolf

## Citizen Louis-Charles: A Novel

*Lizzi Wolf*

I am King Louis XVII, supreme monarch of France, but my realm of influence is no bigger than a dank, rat-infested storage closet in the tower of a medieval castle.

After his father and mother are beheaded in the French Revolution, 8-year-old King Louis XVII is sealed into a pitch-dark closet and isolated from all human contact. As he endures the brutal consequences of his father's misguided reign, the young king wonders why the French people hated his parents so much and how he might rise above their moral failings.

Available on Amazon.

# The Benin Bronzes

Words: Emma Slattery Williams

### WHAT ARE THE BENIN BRONZES?

The Benin Bronzes are a collection of more than 3,000 decorative pieces from the Kingdom of Benin (in modern day Nigeria), which existed from the 1100s until 1897 and should not be confused with the current West African country of Benin. They adorned the palace of the *oba*, or king, and as the finest examples of Benin art in existence are important historical records of the kingdom and its people, the Edo.

More than that, however, the Bronzes are a highly controversial source of ongoing international debate. In 1897, they were looted by the British and are now spread across 160 plus museums or private collections around the world, mostly in Europe and the United States. There may be others that have gone unidentified, too, gathering dust in attics or archives. Only nine Nigerian institutions contain any of the Bronzes. As a significant part of their heritage, the people of Nigeria have made, and continue to make, passionate calls for the repatriation of the treasures.

### WHEN WERE THE BENIN BRONZES MADE?

The majority of the pieces date back to two 'golden ages' of Benin art: the reign of Oba Esigie in the first half of the 1500s and the reign of Oba Eresoyen, who ruled from 1735 to 1750. There are examples, though, from as early as the 12th century and as late as the 19th, right up until the arrival of the British. They were crafted by artists under royal decree, who formed special guilds at the court of the *oba* in Benin City, the capital of the kingdom. The more powerful the ruler, the more artists there were and the higher the quality of the pieces being made.

### WHAT DO THEY LOOK LIKE?

Spanning several centuries and made for numerous royal courts, the collection that we know as the Benin Bronzes does not constitute just one type of artefact. There are sculptures, animal figures, commemorative heads and jewellery, as well as hundreds of rectangular plaques with intricate reliefs on them, originally used to decorate the royal palace. Some depict the history of the kingdom and the Edo people, while others are representations of an *oba* or *iyoba* (queen mother). In death, a ruler would be worshipped, and so pieces of art were also commissioned for ancestral altars and for use in rituals celebrating the ascension of a new *oba*. They were, therefore, central to religious life.

"The people of Nigeria have made, and still make, passionate calls for the repatriation of their treasures"

ABOVE RIGHT: **Visitors view a selection of Benin Bronzes at the British Museum**

TOP: **The precious artefacts were looted during a British expedition in 1897**

GETTY IMAGES X2

### ARE THEY ACTUALLY ALL MADE FROM BRONZE?

It would be understandable to think that the clue's in the name, but not all of the so called Benin Bronzes were crafted out of bronze. Most are actually made of brass, as well as carved wood, ivory, coral,

ceramic and leather. Huge elephant tusks are included in the collection; they once sat in the palace and were engraved with scenes from an *oba*'s life.

The brass pieces were created using the 'lost wax casting' technique, which required a high level of skill from the Benin City metal workers. A wax model of the sculpture would be crafted first and covered in clay or a similar substance to make a mould. The wax was then melted and removed, leaving a hollow space in the clay shell in the exact shape of the intended piece, into which molten metal was poured. Finally, the shell would be carefully broken to reveal the finished product. Traditionally, it is thought that this complex process was introduced in Benin during the 13th century.

### WHY ARE THEY SO IMPORTANT FOR OUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE KINGDOM OF BENIN?

Much of what we know of the dynastic history of the kingdom comes from the Bronzes. While oral history has been vital in understanding the past of the Edo people, the art charted the lineage of the rulers and now offers intriguing clues into the individual *obas*. If few pieces survive from a particular reign, for example, it could suggest the *oba* was unpopular, or was deposed. Either they were not worthy of a wealth of art in their honour, or it was destroyed afterwards to try and erase their memory.

The Bronzes also provide details about the Kingdom of Benin's relationship with neighbouring states and Europeans. Contact with Portugal, which began in 1485 and led to a well established trade by the 16th century that brought European goods to the kingdom, can be seen in some of the pieces that depict Portuguese men wearing helmets and carrying weapons.

### HOW DID THE BRITISH GET INVOLVED?

From the mid 19th century, Britain looked to expand its empire on the west coast of Africa. By opening up trade with the Kingdom of Benin with the goal of turning it into a protectorate the British hoped to seize the region at a time that other European powers were similarly scrambling for control on the continent. The kingdom, however, resisted and rejected attempts at negotiating treaties that would have ultimately ended its independence.

In January 1897, a British party headed by James Robert Phillips, acting consul general of the Niger Coast Protectorate, set out for Benin City to depose the *oba* and install a friendly "native council". Recognising the threat, Edo warriors attacked and most of the British members were killed, as well as many of their African porters. This gave Harry Rawson, a senior admiral in the area, the justification he believed he needed to launch a mass military retaliation and take the Kingdom of Benin once and for all.

With 1,200 Royal Marines, sailors and Niger Coast Protectorate forces, the so called 'punitive expedition' invaded in February and, after 10 days of fighting, Rawson's men seized Benin City and razed its buildings to the ground. The Edo

The Bronzes, most of which were crafted between the 16th and 18th centuries, take many forms. These examples depict a bell, a warrior figure (with hunting leopard) and the head of a royal

ABOVE: **This Bronze, at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, depicts a 16th-century Portuguese soldier**

RIGHT: **A contemporary illustration published in a European journal, showing the 1897 massacre that led to the so-called 'punitive expedition'**

GETTY IMAGES X8

ABOVE: **Protesters outside the Reichstag in Berlin call for the Bronzes' repatriation in July 2021**

ABOVE LEFT: **Oba Akenzua II and his wife pictured in London in 1950. The king fought for decades to have his nation's stolen treasures returned**

were slaughtered in huge numbers, with the *oba* Ovonramwen later captured and forced into exile, the kingdom annexed, and British imperial rule imposed.

### WHAT ABOUT THE BRONZES?

During the sack of Benin City, thousands of treasures from the royal palace were looted as 'spoils of war'. Officers kept some for themselves, while other pieces were sold off to private collectors, but as no thorough records were kept, it became impossible to know where everything ended up. One Bronze, which resurfaced many decades later, was unknowingly used as a doorstop by the descendant of a member of the expedition.

There was no call to keep the purloined Bronzes hidden, however: they were taken during what the British deemed as a legitimate and warranted attack on what they believed to be a savage, barbarous kingdom. Queen Victoria was presented with ivory leopards and, in 1898, the secretary of state for foreign affairs gave a collection of 203 plaques to the British Museum. That was only the beginning; Bronzes were sold and moved around the world throughout the 20th century.

### WHAT ARE THE ARGUMENTS IN FAVOUR OF THEIR RETURN?

The question of repatriation not just of the Benin Bronzes but other artefacts like the Elgin Marbles, acquired during centuries of colonialism and conquest is a complicated and divisive one. For the people of Nigeria, the Bronzes are part of their cultural heritage and a connection to their history; their return would serve to repair some of the wrongs done by the British forces during the 1897 looting of Benin City.

Oba Ovonramwen's son, who came to the throne as Eweka II in 1914, rebuilt the royal palace and managed to have its regalia returned, but it was his son, Akenzua II (r1933 78), who launched the official process of repatriating the Bronzes. He only succeeded in getting four pieces back.

### WHAT ARE THE ARGUMENTS AGAINST THEIR RETURN?

It has long been argued that museums are best suited to house and care for artefacts, such as the Bronzes, as they have the facilities and resources to do so. What's more, their presence in Europe and the US, as well as Australia, Japan and the United Arab Emirates, means the Bronzes are accessible to a large number of visitors. There remains a host of legal issues, too. As many Bronzes came to the museums through donations, they are subject to specific conditions, making the issue of repatriation even more difficult.

The British Museum which holds the largest collection of Bronzes, with more than 900 pieces claims that it is prevented from returning them by the British Museum Act of 1963 and Heritage Act of 1983, which forbids disposing of items except in a small number of cases. The museum is part of the Benin Dialogue Group, formed in 2007, which brings together representatives from museums around the world, the Nigerian government and the Royal Court of Benin to discuss the future of the Bronzes.

> "During the sack of Benin City, thousands of treasures were looted... they were then sold and moved around the world"

German foreign minister Annalena Baerbock and Nigerian culture minister Lai Mohammed recently agreed that Germany would return two Bronzes

### HOW MANY OF THE BRONZES HAVE BEEN RETURNED SO FAR?

Currently, the repatriation of any Bronzes to Nigeria is done on a case by case basis, with institutions choosing to sell or return items in their collections such as the brass statue of a cockerel handed over by Jesus College, Cambridge, in October 2021. Pieces have also been bought at auction, but as the price tag for a single Bronze can be in the millions, this is not a long term solution. As recently as July 2022, Nigeria signed an agreement with Germany for the return of two Bronzes and more than 1,000 other Nigerian artefacts.

Several institutions have pledged to return more Bronzes in the future, including the Smithsonian in Washington DC, while others are in talks to offer temporary loans. Meanwhile, a brand new space, the Edo Museum of West African Art, is planned for Benin City especially for the Bronzes. It is due to open in 2025.

**LISTEN**

BBC WORLD SERVICE

Experts discuss the repatriation of precious artefacts in a recent episode of *The Real Story* podcast: *bbc.co.uk/programmes/w3ct33p0*

# Constance Markievicz's fight for a free Ireland

In 1916, the countess took up arms in a bid to rid Ireland of British rule, and later made political history as the first woman to win a seat at Westminster. But what shaped Constance Markievicz's beliefs?

There wasn't much in her youth to suggest that Constance Georgine Gore Booth would fit the role of a nationalist, socialist revolutionary willing to take up arms and face numerous spells in prison, and so be remembered as the Irish heroine and political pioneer Constance Markievicz. Born on 4 February 1868 into Anglo Irish aristocracy, hers was an upbringing of privilege and high society, either in London or at the family estate of Lissadell in County Sligo. Before she was 20, she would be presented at court to Queen Victoria herself.

Yet Constance grew up socially conscientious and aware of the plight of the working classes. When a famine struck in 1879, she saw her landowning father, the Arctic explorer Sir Henry Gore Booth, provide his staff and tenants with free food; an inspiring deed both for Constance and her sister Eva, a future suffragist. Constance looked to go a similar way: in 1893, while studying art in London, she joined the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies.

Continuing her studies in Paris, she met a Polish count named Casimir Dunin Markievicz. The pair married in 1900, had a daughter (Constance would also help raise Casimir's son from a previous marriage), and moved to Dublin in 1903. There, they threw themselves into the artistic world, and, increasingly for Countess Markievicz, the political one, too.

## FIGHTING ON THE FRONTLINE

In 1908, aged 40, Markievicz embraced Irish nationalism, joining the political party Sinn Féin and the radical women's organisation Inghinidhe na hÉireann (Daughters of Ireland). She also became close with members of the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB), although, as their name suggests, she couldn't join due to her gender. Wishing to do more, Markievicz formed her own group, Na Fianna Éireann (Soldiers of Ireland), a paramilitary version of the Boy Scouts committed to training future soldiers to fight for independence.

Constance Markievicz pictured at Dublin's Abbey Theatre, recreating the role she had played during the Easter Rising

Over the next few years, her revolutionary activities intensified. Markievicz took part in suffragist opposition to Winston Churchill's election campaign in Manchester (he lost); was arrested for the first time for demonstrating against George V's visit to Ireland; and during the Dublin Lockout of 1913, a major industrial dispute involving 20,000 workers, she tirelessly collected food and essentials – even selling her jewellery to buy them – for the protesters.

Markievicz was willing to fight for real, though, and she got her chance with the Easter Rising of 1916. The insurrection against British rule, at a time when focus was on World War I, erupted in Dublin with the involvement of the IRB, Irish Volunteers and Irish Citizen Army, which Markievicz helped train and organise. She greatly admired its founder, James Connolly, for "quite ignoring the conventional attitude towards the work of women".

During the Rising, Markievicz was on the frontline, a living example of the advice she had once given to women who wished to help fight for independence: "Dress suitably in short skirts and strong boots. Leave your jewels in the bank and buy a revolver." Wearing her Citizen Army uniform and accompanied by her cocker spaniel Poppet, she fought for six days with her garrison. But the Rising failed, and Markievicz was eventually forced to surrender, kissing her revolver before handing it over to a British officer.

After her arrest, the countess was court martialled. Defiant throughout, she declared to the court, "I did what I thought was right, and I stand by it," and only had her death sentence commuted because she was a woman. This was much to her chagrin: she had seen her friends executed and told her captors, "I do wish your lot had the decency to shoot me".

## FROM GUNS TO GOVERNMENT

Markievicz was released after 14 months – as part of a general amnesty of those who participated in the Rising – but she was soon behind bars again for allegedly engaging in treasonable communication with Germany. It was during this stint in Holloway Prison that, in December 1918, she put herself forward as a candidate for the St Patrick's constituency in Dublin and became the first woman elected to the House of Commons in Westminster.

She did not take her seat, however, along with her Sinn Féin comrades, as it would have meant taking an oath of allegiance to the king. Instead, the republicans formed their own provisional government, Dáil Éireann, and Markievicz, once released, was invited to serve – the only woman to do so. She opposed the 1921 Anglo Irish Treaty, which created the Irish Free State (independent from the United Kingdom, but still part of the British empire), and went on to support the anti Treaty forces in the ensuing civil war.

But as fighting raged, Markievicz continued to work for an independent nation. This came at the cost of her fortune and her health. In 1927, just a month after being elected again – this time for the political party Fianna Fáil, formed from a split within Sinn Féin – she died at the age of 59. Tens of thousands of people lined the streets of Dublin for her funeral: a tribute to the rebel countess.

**WORDS: JONNY WILKES**

ALAMY X4

An undated photograph of Markievicz in military attire. In 1916, the countess was sentenced to death by a British military court, but was ultimately spared on account of her gender

**"The Rising failed and Markievicz was eventually forced to surrender, kissing her revolver before handing it over to a British officer"**

RIGHT: Markievicz addresses a crowd in 1918, the year she ran to be the MP for Dublin St Patrick's. Despite becoming the first woman to win a parliamentary election in Britain and Ireland, she refused to take her seat

FAR RIGHT: A young Markievicz (*right*) with her sister, the poet and dramatist Eva Gore-Booth. Both women became ardent suffragists

BBC HISTORY REVEALED

HRP111

YOU MAY PHOTOCOPY THIS FORM

# SUBSCRIPTION ORDER FORM

**Please complete the order form and send to:**
***FREEPOST IMMEDIATE MEDIA*** *(please write in capitals)*

## UK DIRECT DEBIT

☐ I would like to subscribe by Direct Debit and pay £5 for my first 3 issues, **SAVING 70%** (Please complete order form below)

## YOUR DETAILS (ESSENTIAL)

Title Forename Surname

Address

Postcode

Home tel no Mobile tel no

Email

☐ **I wish to purchase a gift subscription** (please supply gift recipient's name and address on a separate sheet)

**Instructions to your Bank or Building Society to pay by Direct Debit**

DIRECT Debit

To: the Manager (Bank/Building Society)

Address

Postcode

Name(s) of account holder(s)

**Bank/Building Society account number** **Branch sort code**

Reference number (internal use only)

**Originator's identification number**

7 1 0 6 4 4

Please pay Immediate Media Co Bristol Ltd Debits from the account detailed in this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with Immediate Media Co Bristol Ltd and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my Bank/Building Society.

Signature Date / /

**Banks and Building Societies may not accept Direct Debit mandates from some types of account**

## KEEP IN TOUCH

*BBC History Revealed* (published by Immediate Media Company Limited) would like to send you updates, special offers and promotions by email. You can unsubscribe at any time.
**Please tick here if you would like to receive these** ☐

We would also like to keep in touch by post and telephone about other relevant offers and promotions from Immediate Media. If you do not wish to be contacted this way please tick here: post ☐ phone ☐ For more information about how to change the way we contact you, and how we hold your personal information, please see our privacy policy which can be viewed online at immediate.co.uk/privacy policy

## OTHER PAYMENT OPTIONS

☐ **UK by credit/debit card or cheque** for just £49.99 for 13 issues **SAVING 30%**
☐ **Europe inc Eire** €68.00 for 13 issues ☐ **Rest of World** $70.00 for 13 issues ☐ **USA** $65.00 for 13 issues

**CREDIT CARD DETAILS** Visa ☐ Mastercard ☐

☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐

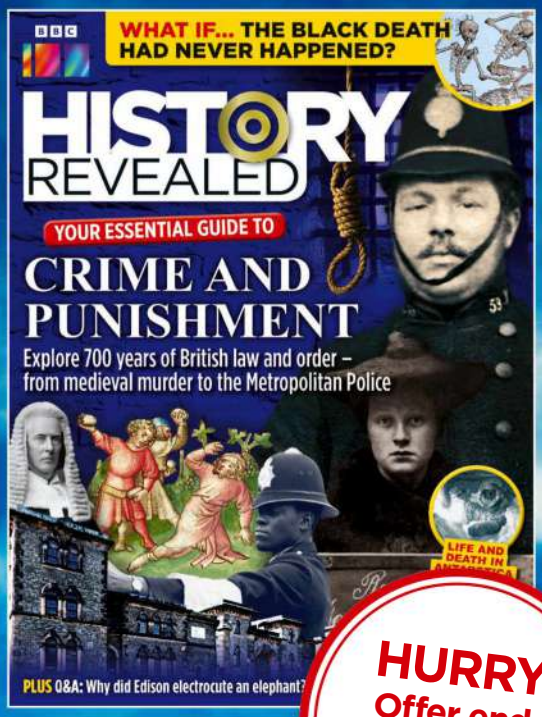
Issue no ☐☐ Valid from ☐☐☐☐ Expiry date ☐☐☐☐

Signature Date

☐ I enclose a cheque made payable to Immediate Media Co for £ _____

**OVERSEAS** Please complete the order form and send to:
*BBC History Revealed* magazine, PO Box 3320, 3 Queensbridge, NORTHAMPTON, NN4 7BF

*Offer open to new UK customers paying by Direct Debit only. Full details of the Direct Debit Guarantee are available on request. After your first 3 issues, your subscription will continue at £18.90 every 6 issues, saving 43% off the shop price. We reserve the right to reject or cancel subscriptions at any point if the customer has previously cancelled their subscription during the trial period for that magazine or any other magazine in the Immediate Media portfolio. Your subscription will start with the next available issue.
**HURRY! Offer ends 2 September 2022**


WHAT IF... THE BLACK DEATH HAD NEVER HAPPENED?
HISTORY REVEALED
YOUR ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO
CRIME AND PUNISHMENT
Explore 700 years of British law and order – from medieval murder to the Metropolitan Police
PLUS Q&A: Why did Edison electrocute an elephant?

**HURRY! Offer ends 2 September 2022**

## SUBSCRIBER BENEFITS:

- **Save 70%** off the shop price – only £5 for 3 issues*
- **Risk-free trial offer** – only £1.67 per issue for your first 3 issues
- **Free UK delivery** direct to your door, at no extra charge!
- **Never miss an issue** of our action-packed magazine, **suitable for all members of the family**

SUMMER SALE OFFER!

# TRY 3 ISSUES FOR £5

when you subscribe to BBC HISTORY REVEALED this summer

INSIDE ENGLAND'S MEDIEVAL CIVIL WAR
INFAMOUS MOBS AL CAPONE
HISTORY REVEALED
YOUR ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO
THE AMERICAN REVOLUTIONARY WAR
The causes, conflicts and consequences of America's quest for independence
THE INCREDIBLE LIFE OF DIDO BELLE
PLUS Oscar Wilde's tragic end Q&A: What is the world's oldest joke?
VICTORIANS ON HOLIDAY
HISTORY REVEALED
YOUR ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO
THE COLD WAR
How a clash of ideas pushed the world to the brink of nuclear armageddon
1707: THE YEAR GREAT BRITAIN WAS BORN
PLUS Did Roman girls play with dolls? Are crystal skulls real?
FROM CORONATION CHICKEN TO VE DAY: AN A–Z OF QUEEN ELIZABETH II
Was Napoleon defeated by rabbits? Who invented earmuffs?

## Easy ways to order

**www.buysubscriptions.com/HRP111**

**03330 162 116**† **Quote code HRP111**

**Scan the QR code with your phone**

SCAN ME

†UK calls will cost the same as other standard fixed line numbers (starting 01 or 02) and are included as part of any inclusive or free minutes allowances (if offered by your phone tariff). Outside of free call packages calls charges from mobile phones will cost between 3p and 55p per minute. Lines are open Mon-Fri 9am-5pm. Overseas readers call +44 1604 973 723.

# 6 THINGS YOU (PROBABLY) DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT ROMAN WOMEN

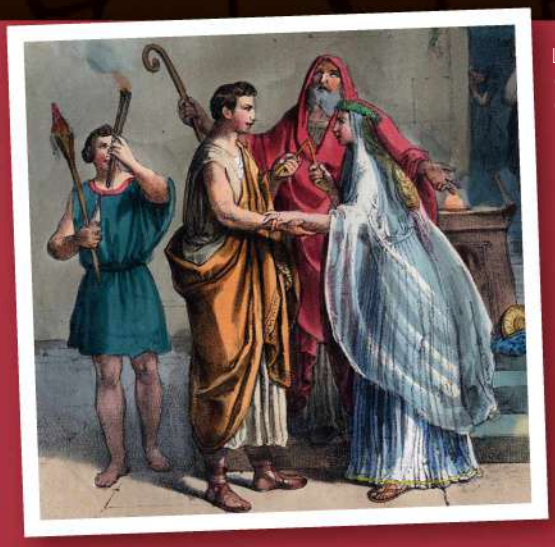
From breastfeeding to unusual beauty regimes, classicist **Dr Annelise Freisenbruch** reveals what life was really like for the wives, mothers and daughters of ancient Rome

## 1 WEALTHY WOMEN USED WET NURSES TO FEED THEIR OFFSPRING

Wealthy Roman women did not usually breastfeed their own children. Instead, they handed them over to a wet nurse – usually a slave or hired freedwoman – who was contracted to provide the service. Soranus, the influential author of a second-century AD work on gynaecology, prescribed that a wet nurse's milk might be preferable in the days after the birth, on the grounds that the mother could become too exhausted to feed. He did not approve of feeding on demand, and recommended that solids such as bread soaked in wine should be introduced at six months. Soranus also pointed to the possible benefits of employing a Greek wet nurse, who could pass on the gift of her mother tongue to her charge.

Yet this flew in the face of advice from most Roman physicians and philosophers. They suggested that mother's milk was best – both for the child's health and moral wellbeing – on the grounds that wet nurses might pass on servile defects of character to the baby. These same men opined that women who did not suckle their own children were lazy, vain and unnatural mothers who only cared about the possible damage to their figures.

Depictions of motherhood in Roman art include this third century-AD statue of a woman breastfeeding (*left*), and a fresco from c15–20 AD, showing the mythological Queen Phaedra with her children's wet nurse (*below*)



LEFT: **Marriage was a vital part of Roman society – but bonds could easily be broken**

BELOW: **A late-Roman wedding ring, displaying the monogram of Christ between the images of a man and woman**

## 2 ROMAN FATHERS, NOT MOTHERS, USUALLY GOT CUSTODY OF THEIR CHILDREN AFTER A DIVORCE

Marriage was the grease and glue of Roman society, used to facilitate political and personal ties between families. However, marital ties could be severed at short notice when they were no longer deemed 'useful'.

Unlike today, there was no legal procedure to go through in getting a divorce. The marriage was effectively over when the husband – or more unusually, the wife – said so. Fathers could also initiate a divorce on behalf of their daughters, thanks to the common practice of fathers retaining legal guardianship over their daughters even after their marriage. This arrangement enabled the bride's family to reclaim any dowry paid to the husband, thus keeping family fortunes intact. However, a few husbands tried to exploit a legal loophole that stated they could keep the dowry if – according to them – their wives had been unfaithful.

Women may have sometimes been dissuaded from leaving their husbands due to the fact that the Roman legal system favoured the

A 19th-century painting imagines a wealthy Roman woman being dressed and tended to by her staff

## 3 ROMAN WOMEN MAY HAVE WORN CROCODILE DUNG AS MAKE-UP

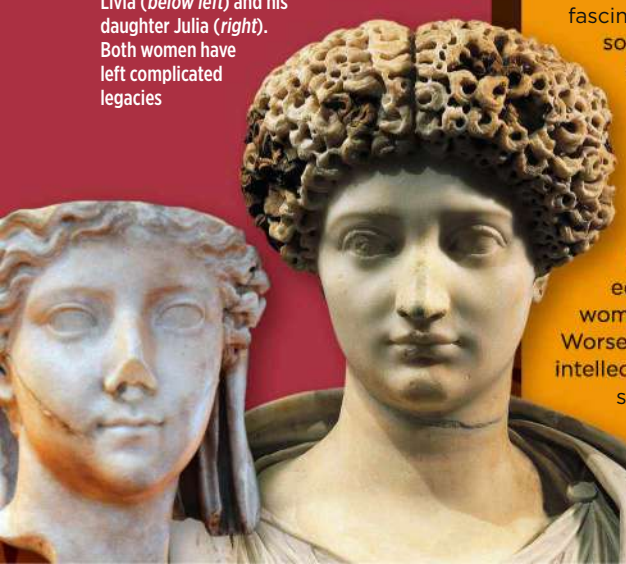
Roman women were under immense pressure to look good. In part, this was because a woman's appearance was thought to serve as a reflection on her husband. Yet, despite their efforts to conform to the youthful ideals of the day, women's beauty regimes still ended up being the subject of mockery. In an elegy by the Roman poet Ovid (43 BC–AD 17), for example, the male narrator gleefully admonishes a woman for attempting a DIY dye job on her hair: "I told you to stop using rinses – now just look at you. No hair worth mentioning left to dye."

There was clearly a thriving cosmetics industry in ancient Rome. Though some recipes would probably win cautious modern approval for their use of recognised therapeutic ingredients such as crushed rose petals and honey, others would certainly raise a few eyebrows today. Spots were treated by applying substances such as chicken fat and onion, while ground oyster shells were used as an exfoliant. More bizarrely, some accounts suggest that women used crocodile dung as a kind of rouge, along with crushed earthworms and oil to help camouflage grey hairs.

There's a chance that some of these practices may have been the invention of satirists, designed to poke fun at women's fruitless attempts to hold back the ravages of time. But it is clear from archaeological evidence that the recipes for some beauty products really were that unusual. In 2003, a small cosmetics pot was unearthed in London containing the remnants of 2,000-year-old Roman face cream. When analysed, it was found to be made from a mixture of animal fat, starch and tin.

father rather than the mother in the event of divorce. In fact, a Roman woman had no legal rights over her own children whatsoever – the patrilineal relationship was all-important. Sometimes, though, if it were more convenient to the father, children would live with their mothers after divorce.

A famous example of this is the case of Emperor Augustus' daughter Julia and her mother Scribonia, who was cast aside in favour of the emperor's third wife Livia when Julia was a newborn. When Julia was later also cast into exile due to her rebellious behaviour, Scribonia voluntarily accompanied her daughter to the island of Ventotene (known then as Pandateria), where she had been banished.



Statues depicting Augustus' third wife Livia (*below left*) and his daughter Julia (*right*). Both women have left complicated legacies

## 4 THE ROMANS BELIEVED IN THE EDUCATION OF WOMEN... UP TO A POINT

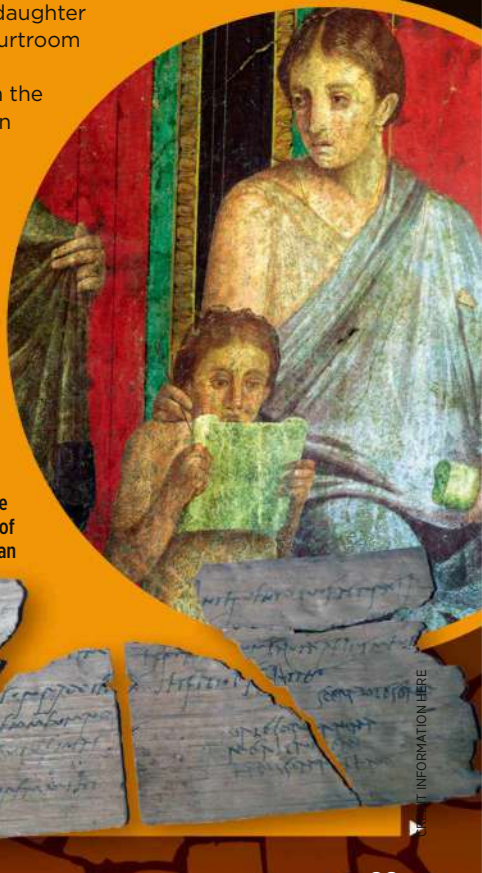
During the Roman period, basic reading and writing skills were taught to most girls in the upper and middle classes, with some families employing private tutors to teach their daughters more advanced grammar or Greek.

This was intended to help facilitate the girl's future role in managing a household and to make her a more literate, and therefore more entertaining, companion for her husband. And while very little writing by women survives from antiquity, that doesn't mean that they didn't write. During the 1970s and 80s, for example, archaeologists discovered hundreds of letters written by soldiers' wives at the fort of Vindolanda on Hadrian's Wall, providing a fascinating insight into the busy social lives of those who lived on the empire's northern frontier. Similarly, we also know that Nero's mother, Agrippina the Younger, penned her own memoir.

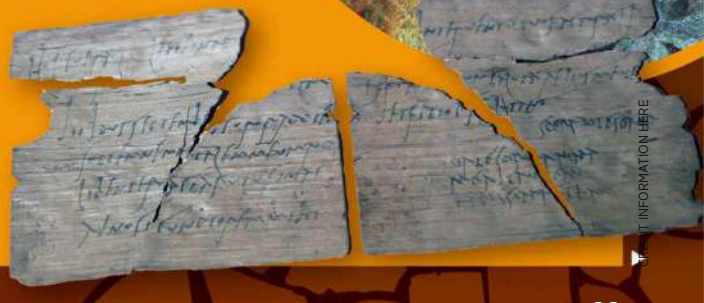
However, the Romans believed that *too much* education could turn a woman into a pretentious bore. Worse still, it was thought that intellectual independence was synonymous with sexual promiscuity.

Despite this, some elite families encouraged their daughters to cultivate an educated persona, particularly if the family had a track-record of intellectual achievement.

Perhaps the most famous woman to showcase such abilities in public was Hortensia, the daughter of Cicero's great courtroom rival, Hortensius. In 42 BC, she stood on the speakers' platform in the Roman forum and eloquently denounced the imposition of a tax on Rome's wealthiest women to help pay for war.



Many middle and upper-class Roman girls were literate, such as the child depicted in this fresco at Pompeii



A birthday invitation found at Vindolanda on Hadrian's Wall is one of the earliest known examples of writing in Latin by a woman

GETTY IMAGES XII, ALAMY XI

MORE INFORMATION HERE

Graffiti found at Pompeii provides evidence that women helped campaign for political candidates

## 5 LIKE MODERN 'FIRST LADIES', ROMAN WOMEN PLAYED AN IMPORTANT PART IN THEIR HUSBANDS' POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS

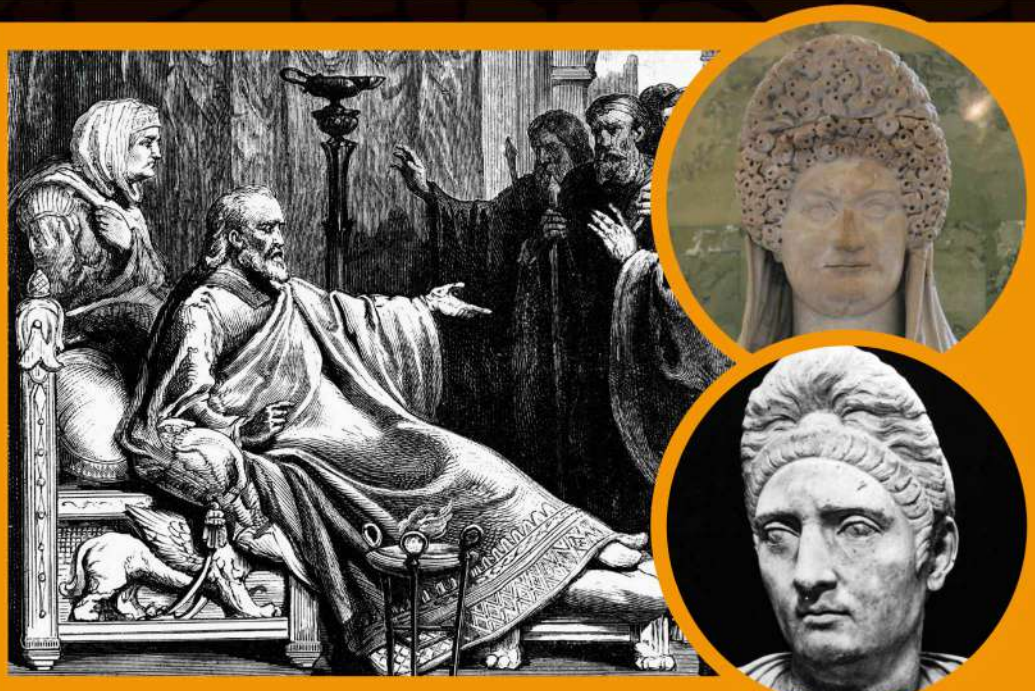
Roman women could not run for political office themselves, but they could – and did – play a role in influencing the results of elections. Graffiti from the walls of Pompeii, for example, provides evidence of women urging support for certain candidates, while politicians' wives played a role not dissimilar to that of modern presidential spouses, promoting a 'family man' image of their husbands to the general public.

Indeed, the wives, sisters, daughters and mothers of ruling figures were often used for propaganda purposes. Across the empire, items such as coins and sculptural portraits were designed to present Rome's 'first family' as a harmonious, close-knit unit, no matter what the reality might have been.

When Augustus became Rome's first emperor in 27 BC, he tried to preserve the illusion that he remained a man of the people by making it known that, instead of expensive clothing, he preferred to wear simple woollen gowns handmade for him by his female relatives. Since wool working was considered an ideal pastime for a dutiful Roman matron, this helped foster the image of the imperial household as a haven of reassuring moral propriety.

However, just as in today's political landscape, the family members of Roman emperors and politicians could sometimes prove as much of a liability as an asset. Despite passing stringent legislation against adultery in 18 BC, Augustus was later forced to send his own daughter, Julia, into exile on the same charge.

Emperor Augustus sought to cast himself as a family man, wearing simple gowns made by his female relatives







## 6 ROMAN EMPRESSES WEREN'T ALL SCHEMERS AND POISONERS

Rome's empresses have long been portrayed as poisoners and nymphomaniacs who would stop at nothing to remove those who stood in the way of their – or their husband's – ambitions.

Augustus' wife Livia is famously said to have killed him after 52 years of marriage by smearing poison on the green figs he liked to pluck from the trees around their house. Agrippina is said to have committed a similar act against her husband Claudius, slipping a deadly toxin into his dinner. Meanwhile, Agrippina's predecessor Messalina – the third wife of Claudius – is remembered for ordering the deaths of her enemies and for her reputation as an insatiable sexual glutton.

But before we pronounce on the guilt of Livia and her fellow empresses, it is worth considering other accounts of Augustus' death that paint Livia not as a scheming poisoner, but as a grief-stricken widow. Moreover, there are such striking plot similarities between the reputed involvement not just of Livia and Agrippina but other empresses in the deaths of their husbands, such as Trajan's wife Plotina and Domitian's wife Domitia, that we should be wary of taking such sources at face value.

What is most likely is that these recycled stories portraying emperor's wives as poisonous traitors and conspirators reflects anxieties about how close these women were to the heart of power during the age of emperors. As US first lady Nancy Reagan once said, "For eight years, I was sleeping with the president, and if that doesn't give you special access, I don't know what does".

The question of how much influence women did – and should – have in that set-up was one that preoccupied the Romans as much as it preoccupies us today.

ABOVE RIGHT: **Pompeia Plotina (*above*) and Domitia Longina (*top*), have both been subject to spurious allegations regarding the deaths of their husbands**

ABOVE LEFT: **Augustus, shown here in his dying moments, was allegedly poisoned by his third wife, Livia; again, this is likely a fabrication**

**DR ANNELISE FREISENBRUCH** is an author, classicist and teacher. Her most recent project is the *Circus Maximus* children's adventure series, set in ancient Rome (written under the pen name Annelise Gray and published by Zephyr)

GETTY IMAGES X4, ALAMY X2

YOUR ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO

# THE EDWARDIANS

Meet the royals, radicals and reformers who made their mark during a glistening age of innovation and unprecedented social change

**PODCAST**

Dr John Jacob Woolf answers questions about the Edwardian era on the *HistoryExtra* podcast: *historyextra.com/edwardians-qa*

**32 The dawn of a new century**
An overview of the Edwardian era's major milestones

**34 Everything you wanted to know about the Edwardians**
Dr John Jacob Woolf answers key questions about Britain's so-called 'gilded age'

**38 Moving with the times**
While a rigid class system still remained, Edwardian daily life was paved with new opportunities

**42 Lords, leaders and luminaries**
We take a look at 14 famous figures who captured the headlines in Edwardian Britain

**45 King Edward VII: a man of the ages**
Inside the life of the man for whom the era is named

**46 Breaking the glass ceiling**
We reveal how Edwardian women shattered social mores: at home, at work and while fighting for the vote

**48 A snapshot in time: 1908**
What sort of world would you encounter if you were to travel back in time to a random year in Edwardian Britain? Find out here

**50 Forgotten contributions**
We explore the experiences of black people in Britain during the early years of the 20th century – from mayors to medical pioneers

**52 Workers at war**
Discover the story behind the Great Unrest of 1911–14, when thousands of Britons downed tools and went on strike

**54 Opinion**
Dr John Jacob Woolf reveals why he believes the Edwardian era remains relevant today

**55 Get hooked**
Take your knowledge of the topic further with our pick of TV, books and podcasts


**HISTORICAL CONSULTANT FOR THIS MONTH'S ESSENTIAL GUIDE**

**DR JOHN JACOB WOOLF**
is an author, historian and co-writer of the Audible series *Stephen Fry's Edwardian Secrets* and *Stephen Fry's Victorian Secrets*. His first book was *The Wonders: Lifting the Curtain on the Freak Show, Circus and Victorian Age* (Michael O'Mara, 2019)


GETTY IMAGES X7, ALAMY X2

# THE DAWN OF A NEW CENTURY

## 22 JAN 1901

▼ After 63 years and seven months as monarch, Queen Victoria dies at Osborne House on the Isle of Wight. Her 59-year-old son Albert Edward takes the throne as Edward VII.

## 24 MAY 1902

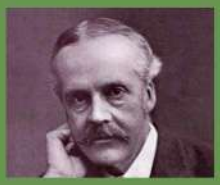
The first Empire Day is held on the late queen's birthday. Shops and schools close and celebrations take place across the empire.

## 31 MAY 1902

▲ The Peace of Vereeniging brings the Boer War to an official end. The British victory comes at a great cost to both sides.

## JUL 1902

▼ Conservative statesman and philosopher Arthur Balfour becomes prime minister following the retirement of his uncle and mentor Lord Salisbury.



## 9 AUG 1902

▶ Several weeks later than planned – to allow the king to recover from a serious bout of appendicitis and peritonitis – Edward VII and his wife, Princess Alexandra of Denmark, are crowned at Westminster Abbey.

## JUN–AUG 1911

▼ Tens of thousands of Liverpool transport workers go on strike, demanding, among other things, an increase in wages, union recognition and an end to medical inspections. In August the tensions explode into full-blown riots, which see two men shot dead by soldiers from the 18th Hussars.

## 6 MAY 1910

Edward VII dies of pneumonia, aged 68. His body lies in state at Westminster Hall for three days prior to his funeral so people can pay their respects. The king's eldest surviving son takes the throne as George V.

## FEB 1910

Britain's first 62 government-funded labour exchange offices open for business, tasked with helping unemployed people find work. The Shoreditch office in east London, for example, lists vacancies for jobs such as 'picture frame gilder' and 'piano regulator'.

## APR 1909

▼ Britain's chancellor of the Exchequer, David Lloyd George, announces his People's Budget, paving the way for social reform.

## 15 MAR 1909

▼ American entrepreneur Harry Gordon Selfridge opens his first department store on Oxford Street, London.

## AUG 1911

The Parliament Act sees the power to veto a bill (except one to extend the lifetime of a parliament) removed from the House of Lords, and reduces the maximum lifespan of a parliament from seven to five years.

## DEC 1911

The National Insurance Act receives royal assent. A compulsory payment of 4d a week by regularly employed men (plus 3d from his employer and 2d from the state) entitles him to free medical care and sick pay for up to 26 weeks.

## JAN 1912

▼ Robert Falcon Scott reaches the South Pole five weeks after Norwegian explorer Roald Amundsen. Scott and his team later perish on the return journey.

## FEB–APR 1912

▼ Britain's first national miners' strike sees miners achieve their aim of a guaranteed minimum wage.

## APR 1912

RMS *Titanic* hits an iceberg and sinks on its maiden voyage with the loss of more than 1,500 lives.

GETTY IMAGES X14, ALAMY X6

# It began with the death of a queen, and ended with the outbreak of a world war. We chart the political, economic and social milestones that defined the Edwardian age...

WORDS: CHARLOTTE HODGMAN

## OCT 1903

▼ The first meeting of the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) is held at the Manchester home of Emmeline Pankhurst. For the next 15 years the movement will campaign tirelessly for women's suffrage.

## APR 1904

Britain and France sign a declaration, later known as the Entente Cordiale, establishing the beginnings of a formal alliance and bringing colonial disputes in north Africa to an end, among other things.

## AUG 1905

The Aliens Act denies 'undesirable immigrants' entry to Britain. Although not specifying Jews by name, the Act is predominantly targeted at the tens of thousands of Jewish refugees fleeing religious persecution in eastern Europe.

## AUG 1907

▲ Boer War hero Robert Baden-Powell (*inset*) invites 20 boys to take part in an experimental camp at Brownsea Island, Dorset, where they are taught some of the military and scouting skills he has previously observed in southern Africa. The Scout Movement is born.

## 1 JAN 1909

The Old Age Pensions Act comes into effect, providing a non-contributory weekly pension of 5s a week (7s, 6d for married couples) to people over the age of 70. Claimants need to have an income of less than 10s a year and pass a 'character test' in order to be eligible.

## JUN 1908

▲ Edward VII becomes the first reigning British monarch to visit Russia, meeting his nephew, Tsar Nicholas II, on board the yacht *Standart.*

## 27 APR–31 OCT 1908

▼ More than 2,000 athletes from 22 nations take part in the fourth modern Olympiad, held in London. Among the competitors are 37 women, including Britain's Queenie Newall (*below*), who wins the gold medal in women's archery.

## APR 1908

▲ Liberal politician Herbert Henry Asquith, the son of a Yorkshire clothing manufacturer, becomes prime minister.

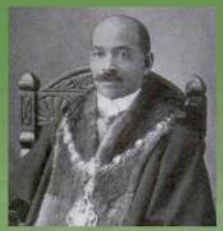
## AUG 1907

Fearing the growing strength of Germany and its alliances with Austria-Hungary and Italy, Russia (already formally allied with France since 1894) enters into a pact with Britain. The new Triple Entente will later become the nucleus of the Allied powers in WWI.

## APR 1912

Herbert Henry Asquith proposes a third Home Rule Bill for Ireland, provoking a political clash between Ulster Unionists determined to prevent home rule and Irish nationalists keen to see Irish independence.

## NOV 1913



▲ John Archer is elected mayor of Battersea, becoming London's first black mayor in the process.

## 4 JUN 1913

▼ Militant suffragette Emily Wilding Davison throws herself in front of the king's horse at the Epsom Derby. She dies four days later from her injuries.

## 28 JUN 1914

Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir-apparent to the Austro-Hungarian throne, and his wife Sophie are assassinated during a visit to Sarajevo. The archduke's death will later come to be regarded as the spark that ignited WWI.

## 4 AUG 1914

▼ The British empire declares war on Germany; the Edwardian gilded age comes to an abrupt end. ⊙

THE DAILY MAIL, WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 5, 1914.

GREAT BRITAIN DECLARES WAR ON GERMANY.

SUMMARY REJECTION OF BRITISH ULTIMATUM.

# EVERYTHING YOU WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT THE EDWARDIANS

**Dr John Jacob Woolf** answers key questions about a brief but momentous 'gilded age' for Britain

**Q: When was the Edwardian era and how long did it last?**

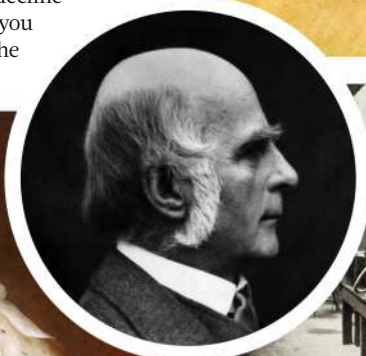
**A:** Technically, it was the period when Edward VII, the eldest son of Queen Victoria, ruled as King of Great Britain and Ireland, from January 1901 to May 1910. Most historians, however, talk of the Edwardian era as extending to the years until World War I broke out in 1914. That is because once the nation had entered the war, the whole tenor of British life fundamentally changed and a new country, both domestically and internationally, emerged.

**Q: What was it known for?**

**A:** Coming as it does after Victoria's long and epochal reign and before the destruction and horror of the world war, it was a liminal time for Britain, commonly imagined to this day as a 'gilded age' all about tea on the lawns and lazy, sunlit afternoons. But once you penetrate the Edwardian era, you see a different side to the myths that have long been perpetuated.

It was a period that saw the spread of the labour movement, an intensification of the fight for women's suffrage, and the rise of Pan Africanism; a key trademark of the decade was the assertion of such marginalised groups. There were plenty of other changes, too: the growth of the middle classes, greater urbanisation and electrification, and so on. It was an era of swagger, opulence, self belief and a bit of arrogance. But underneath this was a fear of imperial decline a decline in the British 'stock', if you like and the birth of the eugenics movement in Britain. So the era was a paradoxical age as well.

Edward VII ruled for just nine years, but his reign helped breathe new life into the monarchy



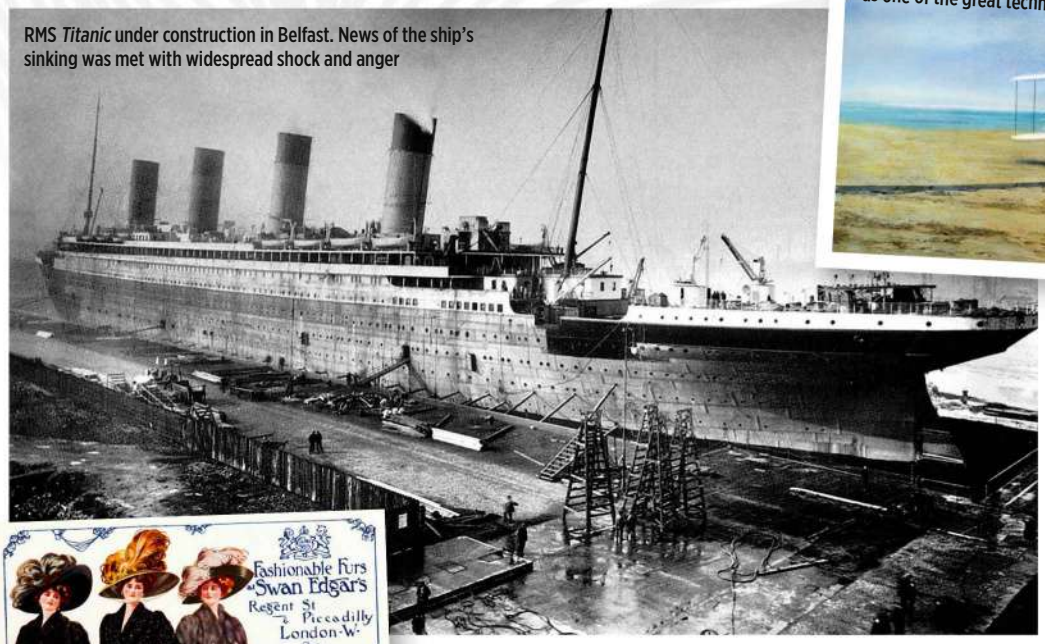
ABOVE: **A photograph of Sir Francis Galton, along with items from his laboratory. The scientist is often remembered today for his controversial work on eugenics**

TOP: **The Edwardian era is sometimes depicted as a relaxed and idyllic age – but that isn't a totally accurate picture**

**Q: How did the Edwardian era differ from its predecessor, the Victorian period?**

**A:** Well, at a basic level, the fact that there was a different person on the throne, Edward VII, set a different tone, one that was less conservative in outlook and a bit

GETTY IMAGES X4, ALAMY X5


RMS *Titanic* under construction in Belfast. News of the ship's sinking was met with widespread shock and anger

The Wright Brothers' first heavier-than-air flight stands out as one of the great technological achievements of the age

Actress Pauline Chase as a 'Lost Boy' in the 1904 debut of JM Barrie's smash hit *Peter Pan*

"THE EDWARDIANS WERE AWARE THEY LIVED IN A MORE MODERN, EXCITING, CONFIDENT TIME"

ABOVE LEFT: **A c1909 poster advertising fur coats. On the whole, women's fashion became less restrictive**

ABOVE RIGHT: **The Edwardians certainly knew how to entertain themselves. Here, a man enjoys a spot of ice skating in London's Kensington Gardens**

more morally lax. Women's clothing was less restrictive, for example. I think it's fair to say that the world became a smaller place and more interconnected during the Edwardian era too. Victorian inventions started to become more widespread, such as electricity in homes and the first local telephone systems.

I think the Edwardians saw themselves as distinctly modern and more global. They even talked about how old fashioned the Victorian speech patterns and culture seemed to them, so there was an awareness that with the passing of Victoria, a new age was beckoning, and that they were living in a modern, exciting, self confident time.

## Q: What would you say are some of the era's defining moments?

**A:** For such a short period, so much happened. Looming large is the promise and tragedy of RMS *Titanic*: seen at its launch as a symbol of modernity and progress, but the news of its sinking in April 1912 was met with widespread grief and anger. Another big moment for the Edwardians was the People's Budget of 1909 10, a proposal by the Liberal government that created the foundations of the modern welfare state. Then, of course, there was the build up and declaration of World War I. But the first decade of the 20th century also witnessed great technological leaps, notably Orville and Wilbur Wright's first heavier than air flight in 1903.

## Q: What did the Edwardians like to do for fun?

**A:** Oh, the Edwardians were great fun! They loved international sports: in 1908, London hosted the Olympics for the first time with more than 2,000 athletes taking part, including 37 women.

Cinema and theatre were on the rise, with many people flocking to see the cultural phenomenon, JM Barrie's *Peter Pan*, which hit the stage in 1904. Another feature of the Edwardians was their fascination with weird crazes. They loved dressing up, rollerblading and skating, writing and sending postcards, and the tango became hugely popular. So, as well as the garden parties of their historical reputation, the era had lots of dancing, music, fashions, theatre visits and sport.

## Q: What about the significant technological developments?

**A:** The development and expansion of electrical systems that took place under the Victorians really picked up speed, with electricity lighting up more and more houses as well as streets. Outside the home, the first electric tram line in London began operation in 1903. Technological innovations continued under Edwardian inventors and scientists, from the car starting ▶

New appliances such as the vacuum cleaner, introduced in 1901, helped make domestic chores a lot less arduous

ABOVE: **A large crowd gathers in London to watch the city's first electric tram line in action**

BELOW LEFT: **Edwardian children were actively encouraged to have fun and play games**

◀ to become widely available, to the invention of devices like the vacuum cleaner (introduced in 1901) revolutionising everyday life.

During the Edwardian era, there were broad advances in the understanding of physics and the material world as well. The theory of relativity, quantum theory, and the theory of radioactive disintegration were just some of the discoveries that had their roots in the period.

## Q: What would it have been like to grow up at this time?

**A:** In contrast to the Victorian period and the Industrial Revolution, this was an era where childhood became more cherished, and young boys and girls came to be seen as agents in their own right. Aided by a government crackdown on child labour, they were given greater freedom to have fun, to play games and make friends. At the same time, the education system was being revamped: more children attended school and learned to read, write and do arithmetic.

While there was still an entrenched gendered division, with girls more likely to be taught how to cook and sew, children were at least encouraged in their schooling. It obviously depended a lot on the class they were born in to, as the life of a child from a working class family would certainly have been more restricted and they would likely have ended up working from a young age. Yet the Edwardian era took childhood as a concept more seriously, and generally speaking there were more opportunities for the young, the majority of whom would have previously ended up in the factories and mills.

**"CHILDHOOD WAS MORE CHERISHED, WITH BOYS AND GIRLS AGENTS IN THEIR OWN RIGHT"**

## Q: Who were some of the main celebrities of Edwardian Britain?

**A:** Aside from the king who gave his name to the era, there were politicians like David Lloyd George, who proposed the People's Budget in 1909 and went on to be elected the wartime prime minister, and activists, including suffragists and suffragettes like Millicent Fawcett and Emmeline Pankhurst. Sophia Duleep Singh is one of my personal favourites. Queen Victoria's goddaughter, she lived in Hampton Court, but her militant campaigning for women's rights made her something of a thorn in the royal side.

This was the time of heroic Antarctic exploration, so some of the biggest celebrities were men like Robert Falcon Scott and Ernest Shackleton. But there were artists too: Arthur Conan Doyle was still writing Sherlock Holmes stories while Beatrix Potter published her first Peter Rabbit tale in 1902. While Edward Elgar is perhaps the best known of the era's composers, on a par with him at the time was Samuel Coleridge-Taylor. The black composer's *Song of Hiawatha* was massively popular, to the point that he was received by US President Theodore Roosevelt in 1904.

Finally, there were other personalities of the day, although they were not exactly celebrities. Dr Crippen is among this list. Hanged in 1910 for murdering his wife, he was one of the first criminals to be caught with the aid of wireless telegraphy after he tried to flee abroad. His story, trial and execution was splashed across the press and he became a notorious name to the Edwardians.

GETTY IMAGES X4, ALAMY X3

**Q: What impact did the era have on the British empire?**

**A:** While the empire remained a key part of life and the Union flag was still spread across the globe, there were concerns about the extent to which Britain could maintain control. The Second Boer War was raging and nationalist movements were on the rise in different parts of the world. The empire was still an important part of Britain's sense of self and its moralising mission. But it had also become dangerously competitive, particularly with Germany.

**Q: What were the political and diplomatic circumstances of this?**

**A:** While Edward VII showed a real interest in foreign affairs, and went on numerous state visits, international tensions were a trademark of the period. The Second Boer War was dividing opinion in Britain, and such was the fear about German imperial ambitions that, in 1909, the Secret Service was established (later MI5 and then MI6). But there were tensions closer to home as well, especially in Ireland. The Irish home rule movement [which campaigned for self government] was a dominating force, and a destabilising one at that.

This was a period of social and political agitation across Britain, culminating in the 'Great Unrest' from 1911 to 1914 and more than 3,000 labour strikes. Russian revolutionary Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov, better known as Lenin, was knocking around Britain, while anarchists and syndicalists [those in worker based groups seeking to advance their rights through strike action] caused as much trouble as possible. And in 1911, a gunfight broke out between Latvian revolutionaries and police in London, dubbed the siege of Sidney Street.

Amidst the unstable activity, the working classes were finding their voice and demanding better wages and protections at work. They asserted their rights through the growing trade union movement, which led to the formation, in 1900, of the Labour Party. Six years later, 29 Labour MPs had been elected.

ABOVE: **The siege of Sidney Street – and its aftermath – gripped the nation in 1911**

TOP: **The imperial posturing of Germany's Kaiser Wilhelm II served to heighten international tensions**

LEFT: **Samuel Coleridge-Taylor's *Song of Hiawatha* earned the composer international fame**

BELOW: **Suffragette Sophia Duleep Singh (*second from left*), became a passionate fundraiser during WWI**

In Europe, there were many divisions and power struggles, with the German kaiser expanding his navy to threaten British naval superiority, and Russian aggression in the east. The situation remained incredibly tense after Edward's death, and ultimately resulted in the outbreak of World War I and the symbolic end of the Edwardian era.

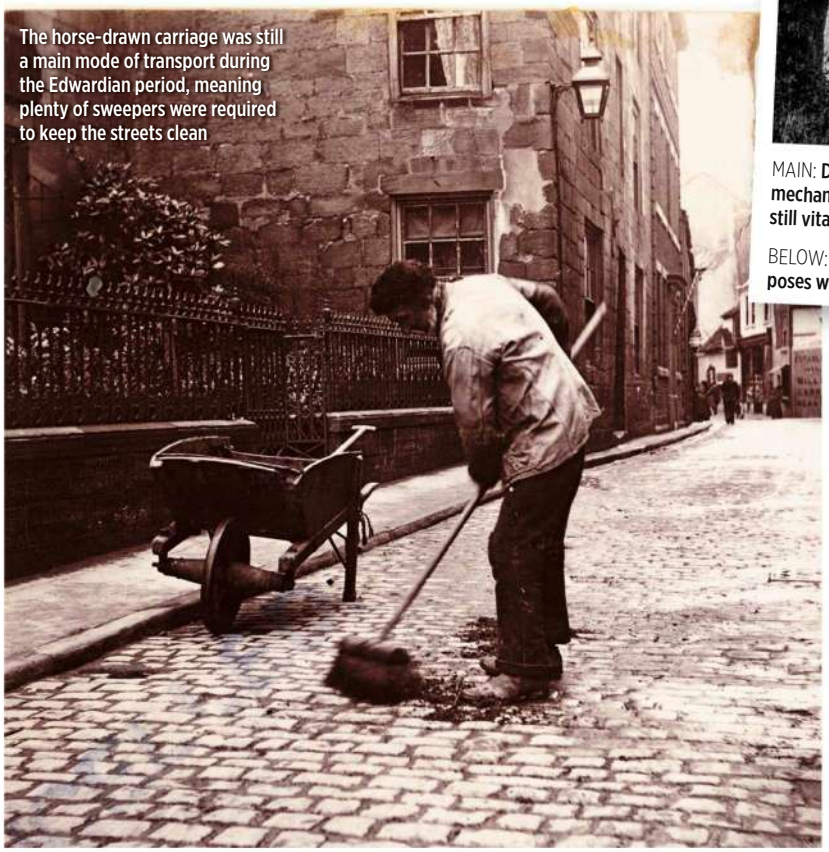
**INTERVIEW: ELLIE CAWTHORNE**
**WORDS: CHARLOTTE HODGMAN**

**DR JOHN JACOB WOOLF** is an author, historian and co-writer of the Audible series *Stephen Fry's Edwardian Secrets* and *Stephen Fry's Victorian Secrets*. His first book was *The Wonders: Lifting the Curtain on the Freak Show, Circus and Victorian Age* (Michael O'Mara, 2019)

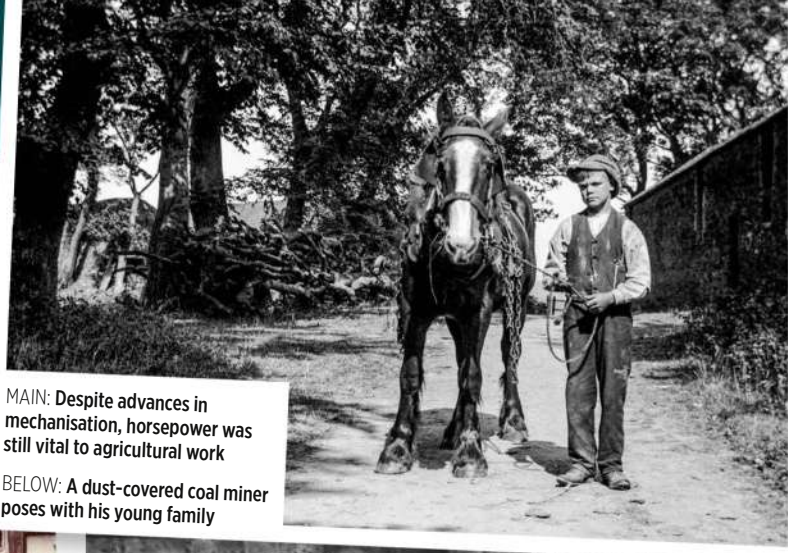
**DID YOU KNOW?**

**'UNCLE OF EUROPE'**

Edward VII was related to most of the European rulers, although he didn't get on with his nephew Wilhelm, the kaiser of Germany. The British king's 1903 speech in Paris helped agree the Entente Cordiale, which improved relations with France.



The horse-drawn carriage was still a main mode of transport during the Edwardian period, meaning plenty of sweepers were required to keep the streets clean



MAIN: **Despite advances in mechanisation, horsepower was still vital to agricultural work**

BELOW: **A dust-covered coal miner poses with his young family**

# MOVING WITH THE TIMES

## While a rigid class system still remained, daily life was paved with exciting new opportunities for Edwardian Britons

Coming after the inherent social conservatism of the long Victorian age, the Edwardian era offered something of a breath of fresh air from a rollerskating craze that swept the nation to the invention of ping pong. However, it wasn't all fun and games: society still conformed to a strict class system, and people were governed by an exhaustingly long list of dos and don'ts from not shaking anyone's hand to having all of your dinner conversation topics dictated by your hostess.

The tone of upper class society was set by King Edward VII himself (*see page 45*), a man who loved to live life to the full he smoked huge numbers of cigarettes and cigars, had a string of mistresses, and enjoyed a diet stuffed with rich foods and alcohol. The families who made up the British aristocracy took their lead from him, eating sumptuous dinners, gambling into the early hours and often engaging in extra marital affairs.

To live such a life of luxury required a small army of domestic servants. Working class Edwardians could find employment as humble maids or kitchen assistants, or else take on the grander positions of housekeepers or butlers, who managed the great houses and made sure life ran smoothly. Or, if they were a particularly attractive or tall man, they might seek employment as a footman those who were blessed with good looks and a lofty stature often received higher wages, as they were the public face of the house to visitors. (*For information about servants' daily routines, see box on page 39.*)

Edward VII (*seated, centre*) at a weekend party in 1908. His long-time mistress, Alice Keppel, is standing in the back row slightly to his left

### DOING THE HARD GRAFT

Although it was a gruelling job, working in service was seen as a prestigious occupation, providing accommodation

GETTY IMAGES X2, ALAMY X5

(although it might be a tiny attic room), food (which might be leftovers from the family's table) and job security. In 1911, more than 1.3 million people in Britain were working as domestic servants – more than the 1.2 million who toiled the land, or the 971,000 who worked down the coal mines.

For those workers whose jobs didn't offer board, housing could range from a filthy inner city slum to a country cottage. Reformers were particularly concerned with the dank conditions of tenement housing in cities, which were notoriously overcrowded and crawling with disease. Between 1886 and 1903, social reformer Charles Booth studied the lives of London's poorest residents and found that 1 million out of 4.5 million were living in homes that were unfit for human habitation.

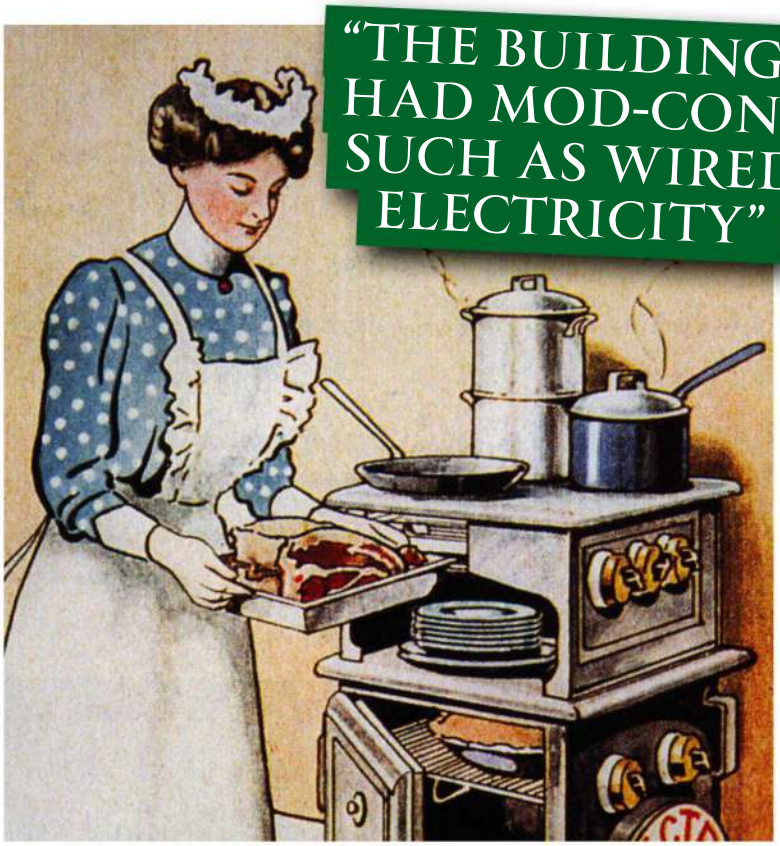
Although the authorities embarked on an ambitious programme to raze these dilapidated buildings to the ground, this approach often made things worse. As the journalist George Sims pointed out in 1902: "Up to the present they have hardly succeeded in solving the great problem, because the evicted or displaced tenants, practically left without any superior accommodation, are driven in to worse." He also described the harrowing scenes where some tenants wouldn't leave until "the point of the pickaxe came through the wall against which [they] were leaning."

While many had to find alternative lodging themselves, some city councils did build housing to help the poor: Birmingham, Leeds, Bradford and Manchester all provided municipal flats. These buildings often boasted a range of mod cons, such as wired electricity a Victorian era invention that took off in the Edwardian period.

## BUILDING A NEW BRITAIN

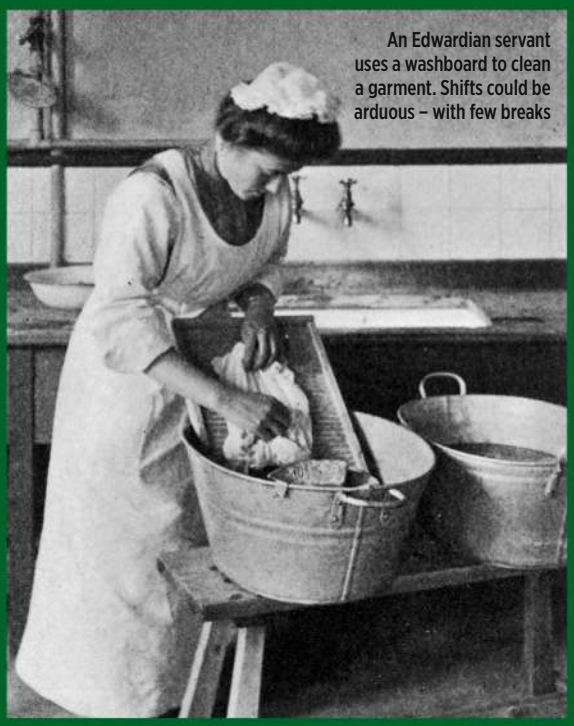
Fresh technological innovations were transforming Edwardian life, from housing to travel and leisure. The middle classes in particular embraced gadgets like electric stoves, as they typically ▶

The poorest members of society still had to contend with unhygienic and overcrowded living conditions



"THE BUILDINGS HAD MOD-CONS SUCH AS WIRED ELECTRICITY"

The aspirational middle classes were moving into newly built homes on the outskirts of Britain's towns and cities, complete with modern plumbing, electrical lighting and hi-tech kitchen appliances



An Edwardian servant uses a washboard to clean a garment. Shifts could be arduous – with few breaks

## THE REAL UPSTAIRS, DOWNSTAIRS

### Serving Britain's wealthiest families could quite literally be a thankless task

Life 'downstairs' was demanding and dirty. Scullery maids, on the lowest rung of the servants' hierarchy, would be up at 4 o'clock in the morning to sweep the grates and relight the kitchen fires. The day's work was long for everyone: on average, a servant would work for 17 hours a day, and commonly get only one afternoon off a week (as well as Sunday mornings to attend church).

In between cleaning, cooking and managing the house, servants could snatch a few moments of rest in the servants' hall. Typically found in the basement, this was where they would eat their meals. A board laying out the house's rules of conduct was also commonly displayed here, indicating any areas of the building that were restricted, and often prohibiting 'followers' – romantic partners – from entering.

Servants were discouraged from having relationships, be it with other members of the household staff (the servants' accommodation was separated according to gender to help prevent any night-time creeping) or with outsiders. Butlers in particular were expected to remain celibate, so they could focus solely on the house.

Unlike the warm friendships depicted in shows like *Downtown Abbey*, servants generally wouldn't make strong bonds with their employers. In fact, employers wouldn't even say 'thank you' when their servants performed tasks for them – they did so much around the house that the family would need to thank them at least 60 times a day.

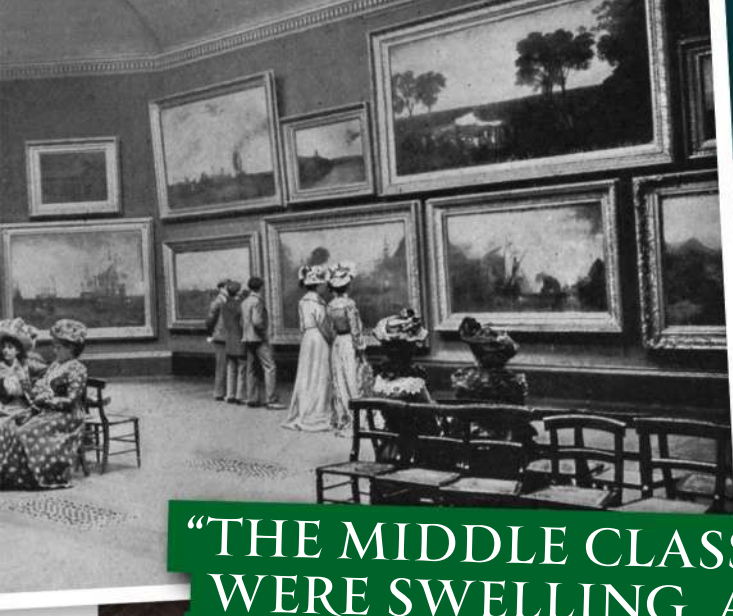
A Victorian image shows boys enjoying sweet treats in a public park. During the 19th century there had been concerted efforts to create accessible green spaces for the urban population – something from which the Edwardians benefited

ABOVE: **Music halls provided audiences with a cheap and enjoyable form of evening entertainment**

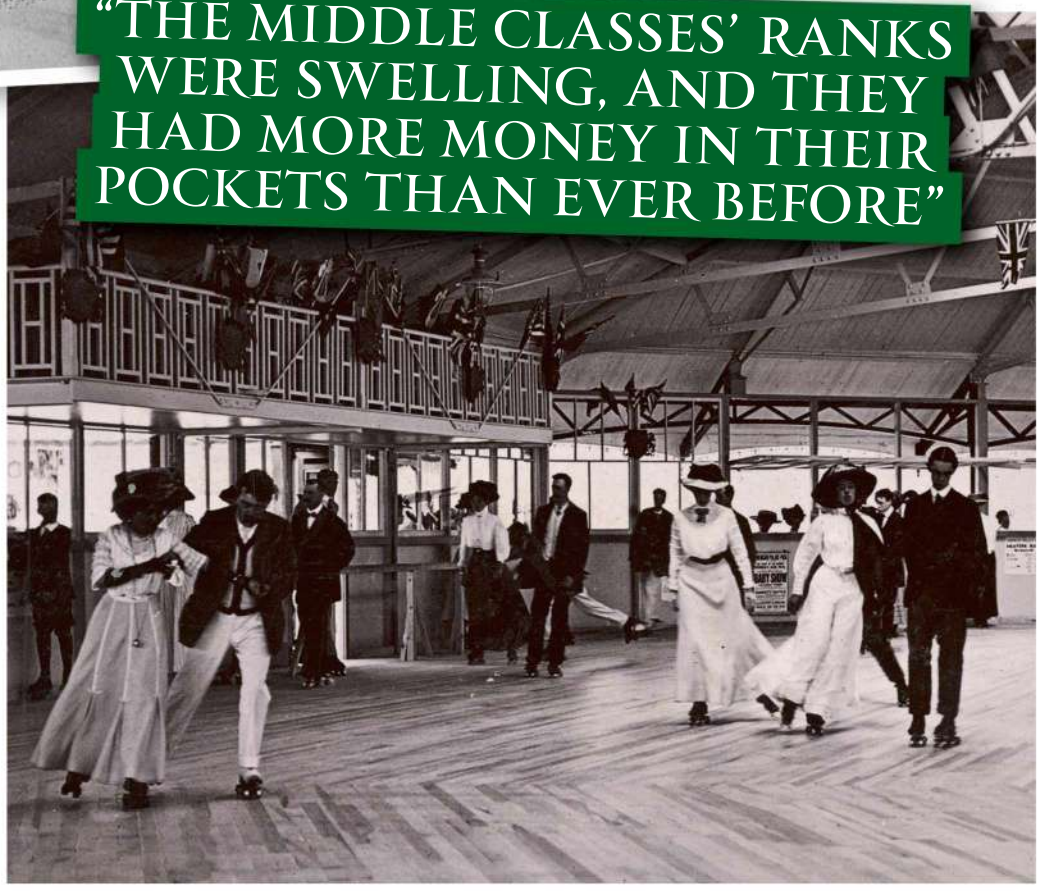
RIGHT: **Car ownership became a realistic aspiration for thousands of families following the introduction of the Ford Model T – like the 1910 model shown here**

LEFT: **Telephones were also becoming an increasingly common sight in well-to-do Edwardian homes**

GETTY IMAGES X4, ALAMY X3



"THE MIDDLE CLASSES' RANKS WERE SWELLING, AND THEY HAD MORE MONEY IN THEIR POCKETS THAN EVER BEFORE"



wouldn't have a host of servants to help cook and clean but wanted to emulate the lifestyles of the aristocracy. They had the means to splash out on these luxuries, too: the middle classes' ranks were swelling, and they had more money in their pockets than ever before. Many bought houses in the suburbs, so they could easily travel to their work be it in banking or manufacturing in the city. This triggered a huge housing boom, with builders tripping over themselves to match the demand for homes on the outskirts of Britain's cities and towns.

## CONVIVIAL PURSUITS

The world was also becoming smaller than ever before. Telephone lines were enabling global communication, with a wireless signal transmitted across the Atlantic in 1901 for the first time ever. Motor cars were becoming more mainstream, and the reasonably priced Ford Model T first rolled off the production line in 1908; by 1914 there were approximately 400,000 licensed road vehicles in Britain. Air travel was another exciting new possibility, with the Wright Brothers making history with their first powered flight in 1903.

Technology also gave rise to one of Edwardian Britain's most treasured leisure activities: a trip to the cinema. The first film showing technically took place at the tail end of the Victorian era, in 1896, when the Lumière brothers' *Cinématographe* device was debuted to fascinated onlookers at London's Regent Street Polytechnic. By 1914, approximately 500 cinemas had cropped up in London alone.

Theatre was also popular: JM Barrie's play *Peter Pan* (later transformed into a novel) took to the stage in 1904 and proved a smash hit. The Edwardians also loved outdoor pursuits, with hunting, horse racing and lawn tennis being particular favourites among the upper classes. The working classes also found time for fun, using their Sundays to wander around museums and galleries, or to enjoy a bracing stroll at the park.

There were more bizarre crazes, too, such as a vogue for dressing up, and perhaps most unexpected of all rollerskating, which gripped the nation from 1908 to 1912. At its height, there were at least 500 rinks in operation across Britain.

ABOVE: **Between 1908 and 1912, a brief rollerskating craze led to the creation of more than 500 purpose-built rinks across Britain**

TOP LEFT: **Municipal art galleries and museums – such as London's National Gallery, shown here – were enjoyed by the masses**

TOP RIGHT: **Outdoor pursuits like hunting remained popular with members of the British upper classes**

## THE AGE OF CELEBRITY

For those who wanted to keep up with the latest gossip of the day, the popular press was booming. Celebrities, such as the entertainer turned countess Belle Bilton and the composer Samuel Coleridge Taylor, were often splashed across the papers. Fans could also purchase postcards printed with celebrities' portraits, so they could bring their favourite stars' likenesses into their homes.

The newspapers and magazines also kept fashion forward Edwardians up to date with the latest trends. Women tended to adopt a slightly less restrictive dress code in the period, as flouncy blouses became popular but corsets were still widely worn. And working class women could dress in the newest styles, too, as the mass production methods that were pioneered during the Industrial Revolution had slashed the prices of clothing.

Men, meanwhile, were dressing to the nines in flashy three piece suits. However, there was one key fashion cue they took from King Edward VII himself: he apparently always left the bottom button of his waistcoat undone. His decadent diet and habit of taking a roast chicken to bed every night as a midnight snack had expanded his waistline, and he apparently couldn't secure the final fastening.

According to the American author Samuel Hynes, the Edwardian period was a "leisurely time when women wore picture hats and did not vote, when the rich were not ashamed to live conspicuously, and the sun never really set on the British flag". Although this sentiment can be jarring for a modern audience, life in the Edwardian era was typically looked back on as a golden era, filled with garden parties and pleasant summer afternoons. Much of this is coloured with nostalgia, but it was certainly a time of prosperity and peace the final stretch of calm before the horrors of World War I, which would rupture British society.

**WORDS: RHIANNON DAVIES**

# LORDS, LEADERS AND LUMINARIES

We examine the diverse lives and careers of some of the men and women who captured the headlines in Edwardian Britain

HG Wells (*main*) is perhaps best remembered for his science fiction novel *The War of the Worlds*, known for its chilling depiction of a Martian invasion (*above*)

## HG WELLS

▲ If Edwardian Britain was slowly emerging from Victoria's long reign and unsure of its new, developing identity, the writer HG Wells was already gazing far into the future. For while his non fiction output was impressively prolific, it was his science fiction novels that made Wells his name, foretelling of future 20th century developments such as space travel and nuclear bombs.

In both his fiction and non fiction, Wells investigated contemporary social problems and ills, deliberating on the means with which to cure them. A futurist and utopian, novels like 1905's *A Modern Utopia* attempted to provide a framework for a new way of living. Other works speculated on notions such as time travel (*The Time Machine*) and alien invasions (*The War of the Worlds*).

After the gritty social realism of Victorian novelists like Charles Dickens, such flights of fantasy, conceived in the safety of suburbia, offered Edwardian readers a sense of escapism; a portal into other ways of being.

GETTY IMAGES X13, ALAMY X1

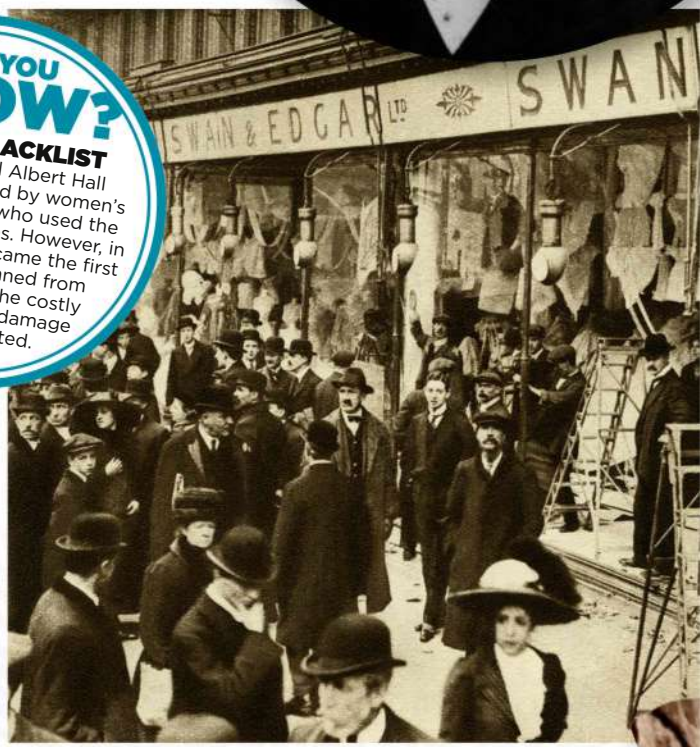
## WINSTON CHURCHILL

▶ Although his greatest achievements would come with World War II, Winston Churchill was already a notable public figure by the time of Edward VII's coronation, as both a celebrated war correspondent and Conservative MP. He defected to the Liberals in 1904 and subsequently held a number of cabinet posts, including first lord of the Admiralty, a role he was holding when World War I broke out.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

**ON THE BLACKLIST**

London's Royal Albert Hall was regularly hired by women's suffrage groups, who used the venue to host rallies. However, in 1913 the WSPU became the first group to be banned from the hall due to the costly disruption and damage they promoted.



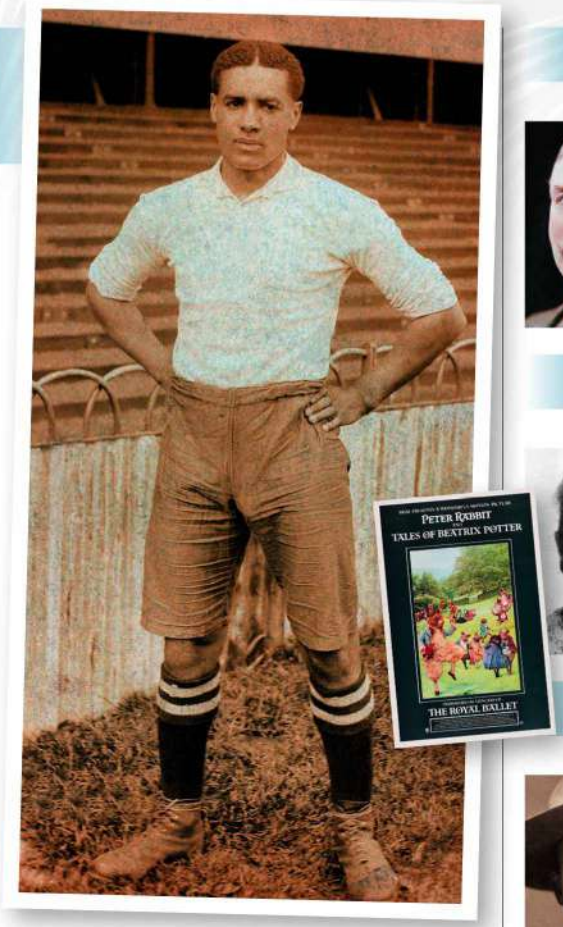

Pankhurst (*right*) openly endorsed acts of vandalism to further the suffragette cause, such as the smashing of these shop windows on London's Regent Street

## WALTER TULL

▶ Born to a Barbadian carpenter father and an English mother, Walter Tull became one of the very first mixed race footballers to play in English football's top tier. He also became a soldier in the British Army who saw action at the battle of the Somme.

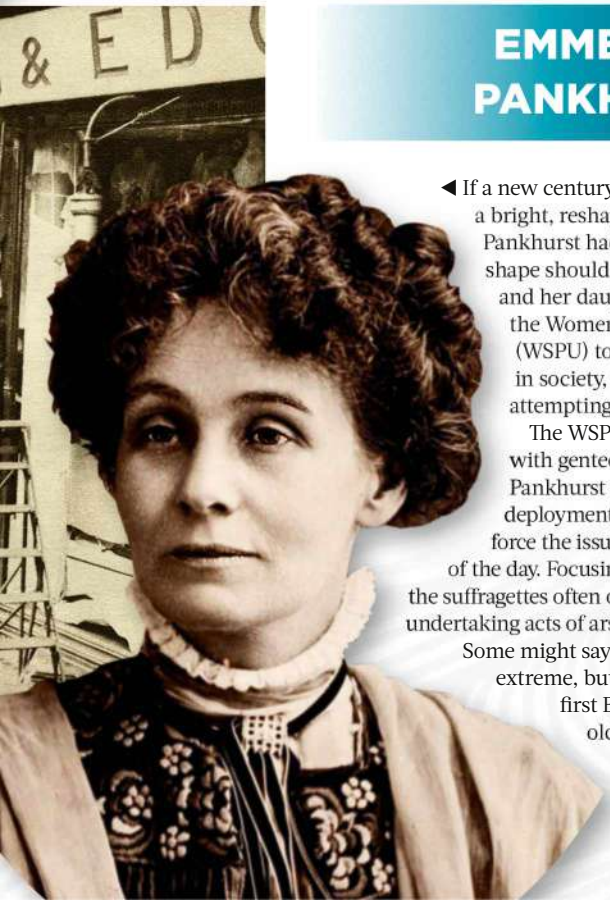
Tull's parents had both passed away before his 10th birthday and he was placed in an orphanage in east London. There he developed a love for football and went on to play for local non league side Clapton, before being headhunted by Tottenham Hotspur in the First Division of the Football League.

But following sustained racial abuse from opposition fans (at Bristol City, the vernacular used by the locals was described as being "lower than Billingsgate"), Tull dropped down the leagues to sign for Northampton Town in 1911. Three years later, he enlisted in the army, rising through the ranks before being killed in the final year of World War I.




Walter Tull pictured during his time at Tottenham Hotspur. He would later be killed in action during World War I, aged 29

## EMMELINE PANKHURST



◀ If a new century and a new monarch heralded a bright, reshaped future, Emmeline Pankhurst had a strong idea of what that shape should be. In Manchester in 1903 she and her daughter Christabel established the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) to further the cause of women in society, most conspicuously by attempting to secure their right to vote.

The WSPU's tactics appeared out of step with genteel, polite Edwardian society. Pankhurst and the union advocated the deployment of militant, direct action to force the issue onto the political agenda of the day. Focusing on "deeds, not words", the suffragettes often operated beyond the law, undertaking acts of arson and violence to get noticed.

Some might say that Pankhurst's tactics were extreme, but they led, in 1918, to the first British women (those 30 or older who met certain property qualifications) being finally able to go the polls.

## ERNEST RUTHERFORD

◀ Born in New Zealand, Ernest Rutherford became chair of physics at the Victoria University of Manchester in 1907. The following year he won the Nobel prize (for chemistry), and would later come to be regarded as the godfather of nuclear physics, creating the first artificial nuclear reaction in 1917.

## BEATRIX POTTER

◀ After a childhood spent largely separate from other children, in adulthood Beatrix Potter became a painter of flora and fauna before publishing her first book, *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*, in 1901. The first of a series of 23 children's books, it established Potter as one of the bestselling authors of the age and would go on to sell 45 million copies.

## ROBERT BADEN-POWELL

◀ An army officer who gained nationwide fame for his heroics during the Boer War, Robert Baden Powell's books on military reconnaissance proved popular with boys, prompting him to host a scout camp in Dorset in 1907. The following year, he wrote *Scouting for Boys*; its enthusiastic reception saw Baden Powell leave the army in 1910 and launch the Scout Association.

## PG WODEHOUSE

◀ Not only was Sir Pelham Grenville Wodehouse the creator of dim aristocrat Bertie Wooster and his pin sharp valet Jeeves, but the humourist was also extraordinarily prolific, writing countless plays and short stories alongside more than 90 novels, the first of which was 1902's *The Pothunters*.

## CHARLES RENNIE MACKINTOSH

◀ An architect, designer and painter, Scotsman Charles Rennie Mackintosh is best known during the years of Edward VII's reign, at least for his buildings, particularly those in and around his native Glasgow. His work, the most famous of which is probably the Glasgow School of Art, ushered in a thoroughly 20th century style, moving British architecture out of the Victorian era.

The main building of the Glasgow School of Art is considered one of Mackintosh's masterpieces ▶

A stalwart of the Liberal Party, Asquith led Britain during the first two years of World War I

**DID YOU KNOW?**

**DYING IN (THE) OFFICE**

Asquith's predecessor, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, resigned as prime minister on 3 April 1908 due to failing health. He passed away at 10 Downing Street 19 days later, becoming the first and only former prime minister to die at the residence.

## HH ASQUITH

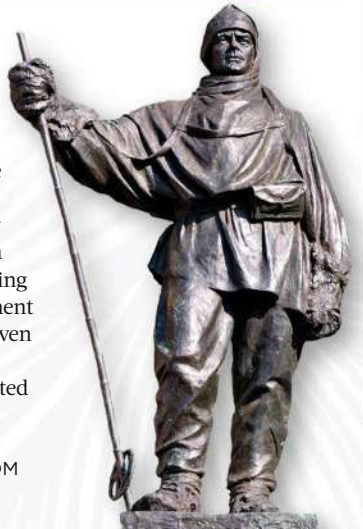
▲ Taking office in 1908, Herbert Henry Asquith was the fourth – and last – prime minister of Edward VII's nine-year reign. An influential barrister who had served as home secretary under William Gladstone and chancellor under Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, he embarked on a series of reforms aimed at modernising both the workings of government and the way of life for wider society.

But parliament's upper chamber, the House of Lords, was an obstacle to the Liberal Party's reform programme, and it wasn't until three years into his premiership that Asquith was able to get the Parliament Act of 1911 passed, which allowed the sidestepping of the House of Lords when it came to enacting legislation, as long as the bill in question had been passed three times in the Commons.

This was crucial as Asquith fought to continue his reforms, namely the establishment of a modern welfare state after the laissez-faire approach during the 19th century.

## CAPTAIN ROBERT F SCOTT

▶ Edward VII strongly approved of the endeavours of Britain's polar adventurers, especially Captain Robert Falcon Scott, whose Discovery expedition set sail just a few months after Edward became king. With a bright new century opening up, Scott was the embodiment of a new era of discovery, even if he prematurely met his demise in 1912 on the ill-fated Terra Nova expedition.

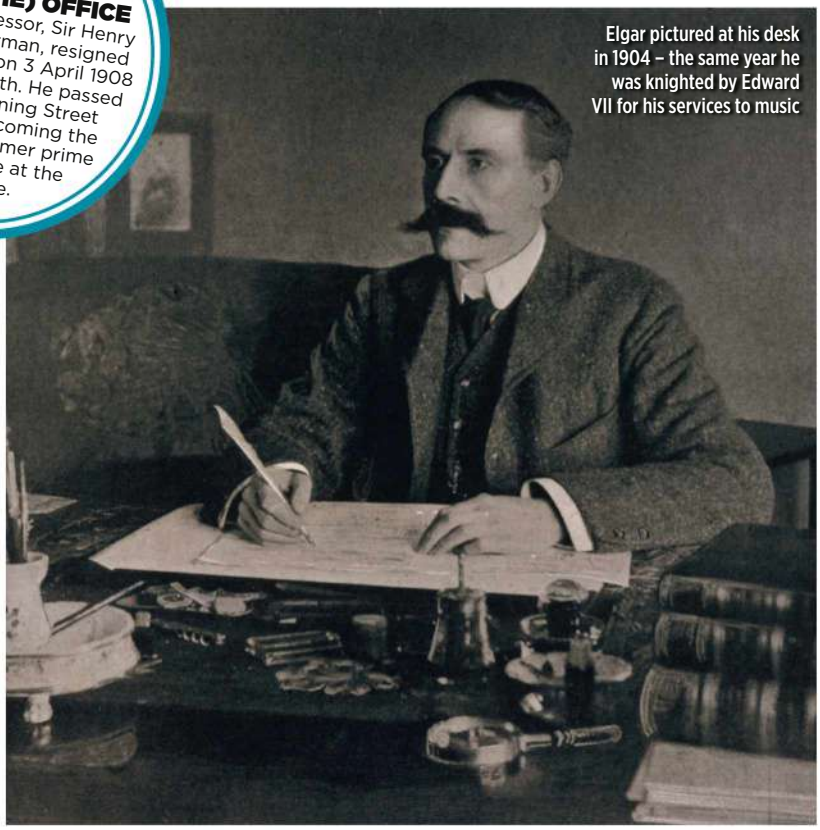


## VANESSA BELL

◀ The older sister of novelist Virginia Woolf, Vanessa Bell was a key member of the artistic and literary Bloomsbury Group that divided itself between London and the Sussex countryside. Her paintings drew from post-Impressionism, playing with form and colour, and very much providing a counterpoint to the rather more dour realism of Victorian narrative painting.

## LORD KITCHENER

◀ The future Lord Kitchener played a significant role in ensuring that the Sun never set on the British empire during Edwardian times. A key figure in the Boer War, he served as commander-in-chief of the British Army in India for seven years, before becoming proconsul of Egypt. Kitchener then became the poster boy for a mass campaign to assemble an army of volunteers in the early days of World War I.



Elgar pictured at his desk in 1904 – the same year he was knighted by Edward VII for his services to music

## EDWARD ELGAR

▲ Despite a comparatively humble background and being raised, to the Establishment's consternation, as a Roman Catholic, Edward Elgar rose to become the preeminent English composer of the Edwardian era. His *Pomp and Circumstance Marches*, the majority of which were written in the first few years of the new century, became the soundtrack of the immediate post-Victorian age, while his Symphony No 2 in E flat major was dedicated to Edward VII shortly after the king's death.

So quintessentially English-sounding was Elgar's work, and so bound to Edwardian times, that the personal aspect of his composing is often neglected. Indeed, as his biographer Michael Kennedy observed, his music "can be described accurately as not 'Edwardian' but only as 'Elgarian'". Another critic, Andrew Farach-Colton, declared that "the composer's Edwardian image has blinded generations to the loneliness and beauty in his music". ⊙

**WORDS: NIGE TASSELL**

GETTY IMAGES X4, ALAMY X2

# A MAN OF THE AGES

## Despite his love of the finer things in life, King Edward VII was a skilled and devoted ruler who modernised Britain's monarchy

When 59 year old Edward VII came to the throne in January 1901, he couldn't have been more different to his late mother, Queen Victoria. The king and former Prince of Wales was the complete opposite of the Victorian ideal of propriety; he lived for life's excesses, and was renowned for his love of smoking, gambling and cavorting with his many mistresses.

Born on 9 November 1841, Albert Edward was the eldest son of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert. Much to his parents' dismay, the young Bertie as he was known to his family was a boisterous boy, and struggled to keep up with the strict educational regime imposed by his private tutors. Despite later flourishing in his studies at Oxford and Cambridge universities, he was at his happiest while partying in Parisian nightclubs and enjoying the company of his private court, which embodied the fashionable and high society elite.

Overall, the prince had a strained relationship with his parents, and things would come to a head when Victoria blamed Bertie for his father's death. While gaining military experience in Ireland, Bertie had spent three nights with an actress who had been smuggled into his camp. A furious Prince Albert visited his eldest son in November 1861 to rebuke him; three weeks later, the prince consort was dead from typhoid his demise allegedly hastened by the stress his son had caused. Victoria would later write to her eldest daughter, Vicky, of Bertie: "I never can, or shall, look at him without a shudder."

In 1863, Bertie married Alexandra, daughter of Christian IX of Denmark, and together they had five surviving children. Despite his mother's misgivings (and his involvement in the occasional scandal), the people came to adore the genial heir, and his recovery from a severe bout of typhoid almost exactly 10 years since the disease had claimed the life of his father was greeted with relief across Britain.

In January 1892, the royal family suffered another major blow when Bertie's eldest son Albert Victor died, aged 28. His second son, George, moved up the line of succession, and Bertie was keen to do everything he could to make sure the young prince was prepared for his future role as king. Even towards the end of her life, Victoria had attempted to prevent Bertie from carrying out certain royal duties, deeming him too lazy and irresponsible.

### A SENSE OF DUTY

Victoria's exceptionally long reign meant that Bertie's rule was brief. However, despite fears that he would be a bad king, he is widely considered the first truly constitutional British sovereign, who paved the way for the modern monarchy. A skilled diplomat and a talented linguist, he left a legacy of improved relations between Britain and France, and became the first reigning British monarch to visit Russia.

Importantly, he also made concerted efforts to present himself as a king for all men. At a time when anti Semitism was rife, Bertie warmly welcomed Jews into his inner social circle, and he even enquired after the radical politician Keir Hardie a staunch republican when he heard the Scotsman was unwell.

In March 1910, Bertie faced criticism for not returning from an overseas trip amid the turmoil triggered by the Liberal government's People's Budget, which was being blocked by the House of Lords. Unbeknown to the public, Bertie had suffered a collapse. Years of smoking and overeating had wrought havoc on his body, and he was now gravely ill.

Amid this constitutional crisis, Edward VII died, aged 68. On 6 May 1910, he suffered multiple heart attacks before falling into unconsciousness his last words expressed his joy that his horse had won a race at Kempton Park. The novelist and playwright JB Priestley would later describe him as "the most popular king England had known since the earlier 1660s".

**WORDS: EMMA SLATTERY WILLIAMS**

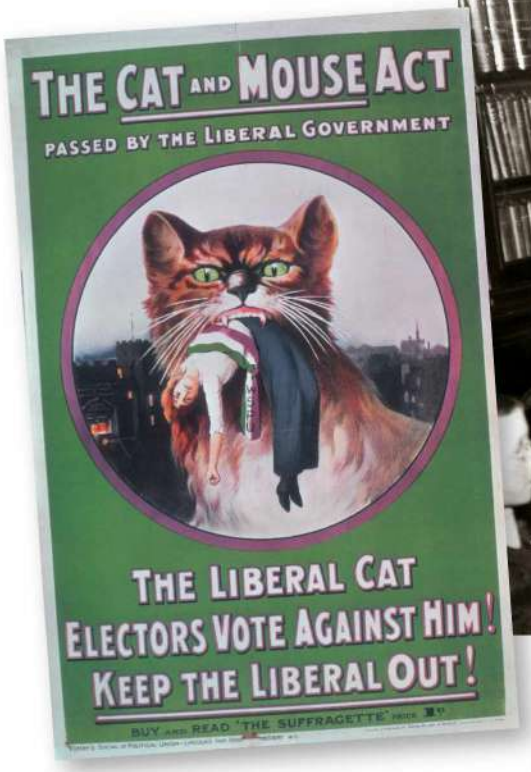
GETTY IMAGES X4

LEFT: **As Prince of Wales, Bertie embarked on a royal tour of the Indian subcontinent, where his friendly nature endeared him to local rulers**

RIGHT: **The king in his coronation robes, alongside a painting of his wife, Alexandra. Bertie went against his mother's wishes by ruling as Edward VII, not as Albert Edward I**

# BREAKING THE GLASS CEILING

## The Edwardian era saw countless courageous women rise up and shatter social mores – at home, at work and in public life


THE CAT AND MOUSE ACT
PASSED BY THE LIBERAL GOVERNMENT
THE LIBERAL CAT
ELECTORS VOTE AGAINST HIM!
KEEP THE LIBERAL OUT!
BUY AND READ 'THE SUFFRAGETTE'

"I am here as a soldier who has temporarily left the field of battle in order to explain it seems strange it should have to be explained what civil war is like when civil war is waged by women."

These words, spoken by prominent women's suffrage campaigner Emmeline Pankhurst in 1913 to an audience in the US state of Connecticut, describe the fight that many women took up during the early years of the 20th century. In her now infamous 'Freedom or death' speech, Pankhurst spoke of the numerous hardships suffered by imprisoned women and the torture endured by campaigners who chose to go on hunger strike. Her name (along with her daughters Sylvia and Christabel) endures as one of the most famous of the Edwardian era.

Though by no means the first in Britain's history to campaign for the vote, societies like the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) founded in 1903 and whose militant members were nicknamed 'suffragettes' by the *Daily Mail* in 1906 took on new momentum in the period. The rapid urbanisation of the 19th century Industrial Revolution had brought welcome changes for many women, giving them a wider range of opportunities to earn a wage. But it also came with hardship, with most women still expected to marry, maintain homes and manage families, many with multiple children (ideas of birth control would not be discussed more openly until near the end of the period).

ABOVE: **Christabel, Emmeline and Sylvia Pankhurst lead a suffragette parade in London, 1911**

TOP RIGHT: **Women may have had more opportunities to earn a wage, but they were still expected to look after large families**

TOP LEFT: **A WSPU poster criticises the government's 'Cat and Mouse Act', which saw hunger strikers released from prison and rearrested once their health improved**

And so, although women such as the Pankhursts and Millicent Garrett Fawcett, leader of the non militant National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies (NUWSS), were from inarguably middle class backgrounds, this was no privileged or narrow movement. In a world rigorously divided by class, tens of thousands of working class women also joined the cause. Radicalisation of urban workers spurred on the suffrage fight, and speeches were given at factory gates, rallying women towards unionism. Suffragists like Ada Nield Chew campaigned for workers' wages and better welfare for working mothers, advocating nursery care for the babies of all working women to be paid for, she suggested, by levying additional taxes on incomes of over £1,000 per annum.

By the Edwardian era, it wasn't just factory work or domestic service that occupied women. The 1901 census recorded women working as lawyers' clerks, physicians, dentists and dental

GETTY IMAGES X7, ALAMY X1

TOP LEFT: **A London primary school class pictured in 1905. The Edwardian period saw many women enter the teaching profession**

BELOW LEFT: **Birth control advocate Marie Stopes with her husband, Humphrey Verdon Roe. Her book *Married Love* became a bestseller**

BELOW RIGHT: **The mass production of affordable bicycles gave women greater freedom to roam**

The upheaval of war in 1914 brought an abrupt end to many of the Edwardian era's most restrictive traditions, and required many women to step into roles previously held by men, such as managing budgets and taking up munitions or land work. These collapsing barriers brought down with them many of the arguments against women gaining the vote.

The first significant victory would not arrive until 1918, in the wake of World War I, when women over 30 who owned property were granted the vote in part, a recognition of the 'men's work' they had carried out during the conflict. Though far from universal, it was another step in the fight for equality. As Pankhurst had told her Connecticut audience in 1913: "If we win it, this hardest of all fights, then, to be sure, in the future it is going to be made easier for women all over the world to win their fight when their time comes."

**WORDS: ELINOR EVANS**

## "THE UPHEAVAL OF WAR BROUGHT AN ABRUPT END TO MANY OF THE ERA'S MOST RESTRICTIVE TRADITIONS"

assistants, and during the period there was also a marked rise in women becoming teachers. But, at a time when women and men were expected to occupy different spheres of society, the battle was far from won: a common argument was that domestic service was the best option for women because it was good 'training' for becoming a wife; and when a female doctor was appointed at Macclesfield Infirmary in 1901, male colleagues walked out. She was forced to resign.

The suffrage fight was particularly reviled as it bucked against the rigid etiquette of the day. Many campaigners were openly jeered. Contemporary postcards caricatured leading suffragists and suffragettes as unattractive and man hating, or as sexually depraved creatures who needed to be 'tamed'.

### THE ANGEL IN THE HOUSE

The Edwardian era was a time when 'respectable' women would not remove their gloves in public, when women were expected to be subservient, meek and live their lives almost entirely in the domestic sphere. In Edwardian Britain, the ideal place of women was in the home. Social mores had not yet moved on from women as the 'angel in the house', a Victorian ideal that Virginia Woolf later described as "intensely sympathetic... immensely charming... utterly unselfish." Such a woman, wrote Woolf, "excelled in the difficult arts of family life," and never "had a mind or a wish of her own, but preferred to sympathise always with the minds and wishes of others."

Though some strides had been made in the Victorian era as to women's marital rights, such as the Married Women's Property Act of 1870 (allowing women to maintain ownership of their property and earnings after marriage), cultural taboos persevered into the early 20th century, with many rules around adultery and divorce favouring men, fuelled by a pervasive double standard regarding sexual morality. In 1901, just 14 per cent of women under 45 were unmarried. These women had the limited options of living with their immediate family, or possibly becoming a 'companion' to an older woman or family member.

Nevertheless, the era also stoked the beginnings of a revolution in women's private lives. Marie Stopes' *Married Love*, published in 1918, was groundbreaking for openly discussing methods of birth control. Advances in technology, too, granted new opportunities. Domestic sewing machines, such as those produced by Singer, gave women more control over the clothes they wore (*see box*), and the invention and mass production of the bicycle presented opportunities for wider travel potentially without a chaperone.

## FASHIONING FREEDOMS

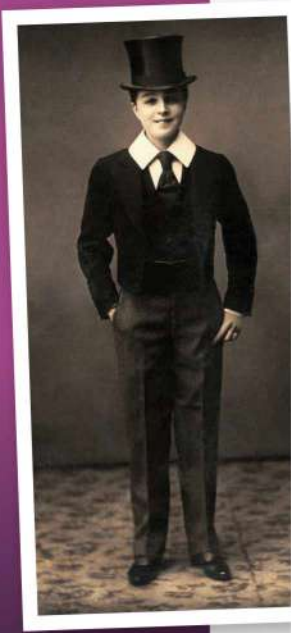
### The social changes of the Edwardian era also had an impact on women's wardrobes

At the start of the Edwardian period, women's fashion favoured the 'S' curve, a shape that pushed the hips back and the bust forward, with the wealthiest women sporting high lace collars and plenty of embellishments.

But an increase in leisure activities soon brought about a change. With crinolines and corsets no longer suitable for pursuits such as riding a bicycle, garments that restricted movement fell out of fashion. Draped, corset-free dresses by designers such as Paul Poirot were favoured, while smaller hats such as boaters replaced wider, more elaborate feathered brims.

Elsewhere, musical variety performers such as Vesta Tilley pushed boundaries even further by appearing on stage at performances in trousers (Queen Mary, wife of George V, reportedly covered her eyes at the sight).

War brought about even more radical change, with women donning overalls and tunics to carry out work in factories and farms. As social historian Arthur Marwick wrote in 1965 of the war's impact on women's lives: "However far politicians were to put the clocks back in other steeples in the years after the war, no one ever put the lost inches back on the hems of women's skirts."

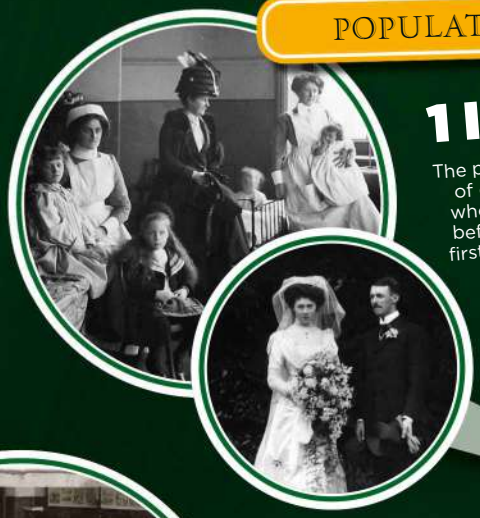


Vesta Tilley was famous for her impersonations of men

# A SNAPSHOT IN TIME:

What sort of world would you encounter if you were to travel back in time to a random year in Edwardian Britain? Find out here...

## POPULATION



**1 IN 8**
The proportion of children who will die before their first birthday

**<1%**
The percentage of people born in this year who will reach 100

**1.1M**
The number of people born in England in 1908

## WEATHER

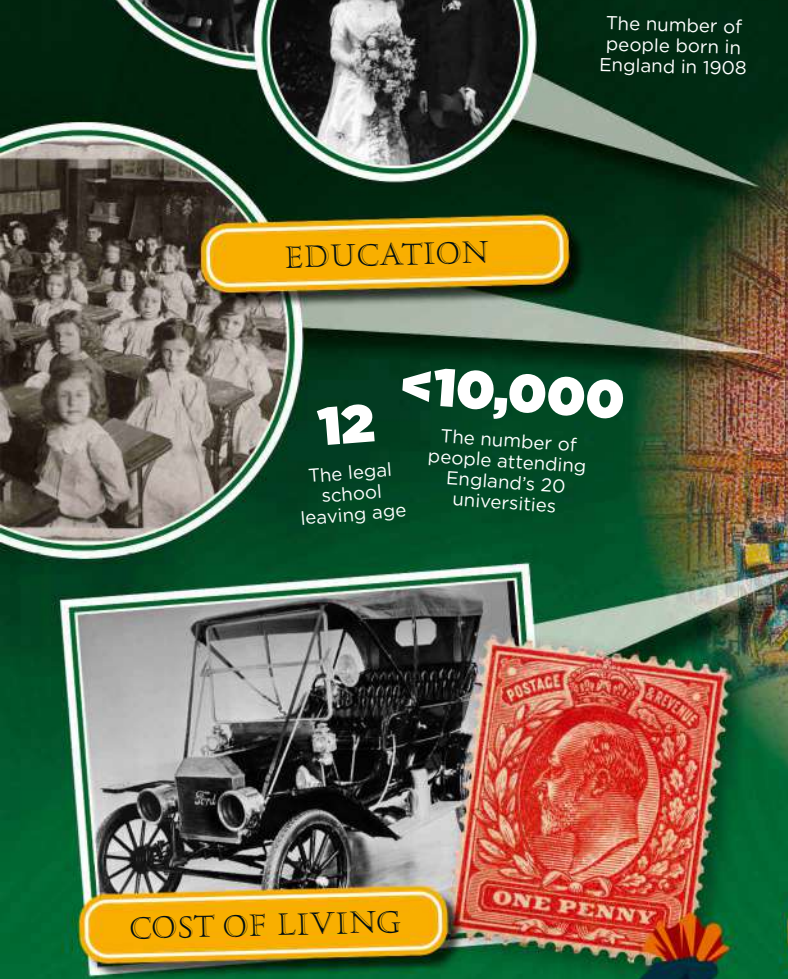
▶ A freak cold spell in April sees heavy snow hit many parts of Britain, with temperatures of -12.8°C recorded in both Yorkshire and Perth in Scotland, and blizzards across the Thames Valley and the Midlands. A heatwave in early October sees temperatures reach as high as 28°C in parts of England.

## EDUCATION



**12**
The legal school leaving age

**<10,000**
The number of people attending England's 20 universities



## COST OF LIVING




**4.7 PENCE**
The price of petrol, per litre

**1 PENNY**
The price of a pint of bitter at the pub

**£70**
A person's annual earnings (equivalent to approximately £6,000 today)

## OLYMPICS

▶ The Summer Olympics are held in London, with 2,184 competitors taking part in 110 events across 21 sports.

**56**
The number of golds won by Britain

**2:55:18.4**
The winning time for the men's marathon

GETTY IMAGES XII, ALAMY X9

# 1908

## ENTERTAINMENT

▶ Music halls still offer much of the entertainment of the day. Among the offerings this year are *The Belle of Brittany* – a musical comedy about a miller's daughter who falls in love with the son of a marquis – and *The King of Cadonia*, which runs for 333 performances at London's Prince of Wales Theatre.

## FASHION

▼ For women, the 'S' silhouette – created by so-called 'health' corsets that push the bust forward and the hips back to avoid pressure on the abdomen – is still very much *en vogue*. For men, clothes related to sporting pursuits such as golf and cricket, are becoming more acceptable as daywear.

**WORDS: CHARLOTTE HODGMAN**

## WORLD EVENTS

**▶ 27 FEBRUARY**
Australia wins the 1907/08 Test series against England (4–1) and regains the Ashes.

**▶ MARCH**
A group from Ernest Shackleton's Nimrod expedition become the first to ascend Antarctica's Mount Erebus.

**▶ 14 MAY**
Mechanic Charles Furnas (*right*) becomes the world's first airplane passenger when he takes turns flying with Wilbur and Orville Wright.

**▶ 14 NOVEMBER**
Albert Einstein (*right*) presents his quantum theory of light, highlighting, among other things, that light operates at a constant speed despite space and time.

## DISCOVERIES

**▶ ARCHAEOLOGY**
Otto Hauser (*right*) unearths the 40,000-year-old skeleton of a Neanderthal boy in southwest France.

**▶ ASTRONOMY**
In June, 80 million trees near the Stony Tunguska River in Yeniseysk Governorate, Russia, are flattened by a giant fireball (possibly caused by a meteorite or comet exploding close to the Earth's surface).

**▶ CHEMISTRY**
Japanese chemist Kikunae Ikeda successfully isolates monosodium glutamate (MSG), which is still widely used as a flavour enhancer in foods today.

**▶ PHYSICS**
Hans Geiger and Ernest Rutherford invent the Geiger counter, an instrument used to detect and measure radiation.

## BORN AND DIED

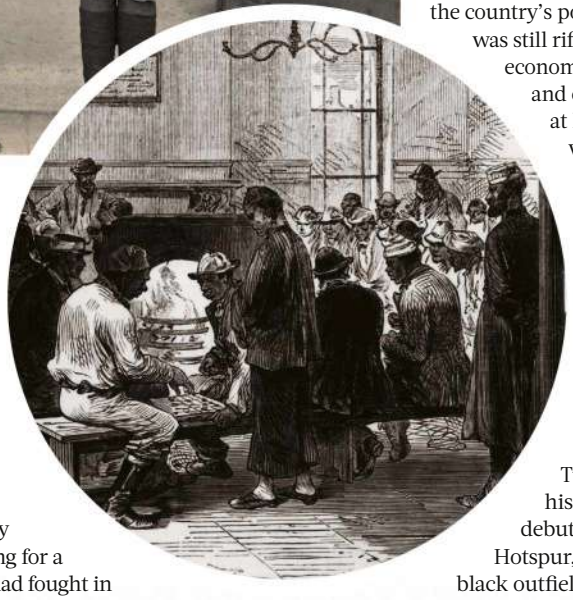
**◀ BORN: 28 MAY**
IAN FLEMING
British author, best known for his *James Bond* series of spy novels

**DIED: 6 FEB ▶**
HARRIET SAMUEL
Businesswoman and founder of H Samuel jewellers

This article contains Parliamentary information licensed under the Open Parliament Licence v3.0

# FORGOTTEN CONTRIBUTIONS

**Lola Jaye** reveals how Britain's black population helped to shape the Edwardian period – from medicine to politics



ABOVE: **An illustration depicts out-of-work sailors at the Strangers' Home for Asiatics, Africans, and South Sea Islanders**

TOP LEFT: **Troops of the King's African Rifles in London for Edward VII's coronation, 1902**

GETTY IMAGES X5, ALAMY X2

During the coronation celebrations of King Edward VII and his queen, Alexandra, in August 1902, more than 2,000 representatives from the British empire's colonial forces took part in a procession that lined the streets of London. Among them was a contingent of black soldiers from the recently raised King's African Rifles, which had been formed to bring together the various imperial regiments in east Africa. So as the crowds cheered the procession as it passed through the capital on that August day, black faces were visible en masse. And as the coronation had been delayed by around six weeks due to Edward falling ill, the soldiers had already become something of a feature in London as they spent their time seeing the landmarks.

But it was not just those who visited from around the world that gave Edwardian Britain a black presence. There was a small but significant population of black Britons, consisting of people who had travelled to the 'mother country' of the empire themselves, along with the descendants of those who had made the journey over the past few centuries: formerly enslaved people looking for a new life, troops who had fought in the wars in America, and wealthy elites who had come to the centre of British imperialism in order to study or work.

In fact, small, multicultural communities had already begun to develop in port cities such as Liverpool, Cardiff and, of course, London (congregating in Canning Town, north of the docks), as they had been the places most strongly connected to the transatlantic slave trade and the commerce around slave produced goods. And when black seamen had been abandoned by their employers, they had often decided to stay and set up homes, or simply found themselves with no other choice. Indeed, the Strangers' Home for Asiatics, Africans and South Sea Islanders, located in the Limehouse area of east London, had been established in the mid 19th century to house unemployed and destitute sailors.

## OUT OF THE RECORDS

By the end of the Edwardian era, the black population in Britain was around 10,000. Although this figure is far from absolute, since skin colour is not often mentioned in historical records, it is likely that at least part of this population was among the country's poor. Poverty in Britain was still rife; according to a study by economic historian Ian Gazeley and economist Andrew Newell, at least 23 per cent of urban working households had incomes insufficient to meet "minimum needs" in 1904.

Yet there were some people who had opportunities to participate in pursuits like entrepreneurship, politics, sport, the arts and the military. Walter Daniel John Tull, for example, made his professional football debut in 1909 for Tottenham Hotspur, making him the first black outfield player in the English top flight. Having joined up in World War I, he made history again by being commissioned as a second lieutenant in 1917 and becoming the first black officer to lead white British troops into battle.

Scientific racism still clung to the view that black people were inferior (as recently as 1899, entertainment venues like Earls Court had offered visitors the chance to have "a peek at the natives"), but there were figures in Edwardian

ABOVE: **Although their presence is often missing from official records, black people – such as the women in this c1908 photograph, taken at a convalescent home – were very much a part of British society**

ABOVE RIGHT: **Edward Tull-Warnock qualified as one of the first black dentists in Britain**

RIGHT: **His brother Walter (*circled*) played for Tottenham Hotspur, and was an officer during World War I**

# "BLACK EDWARDIANS ARE SO MUCH MORE THAN HISTORICAL FOOTNOTES"

society presenting a very different image. There were respected black members of the Salvation Army, and bandsmen of the West India Regiment were regular, popular performers at Crystal Palace during the summer of 1905.

With the era also seeing the growth of the women's suffrage campaign, at a time when the British empire was at its peak, it would not have been unusual for imperialist views to be echoed in the movement. Again, the role of women of colour has proved difficult to trace in the historical records, but in 1911 a suffrage march included people of Indian descent, intended to demonstrate the need for British women to have the vote as it would serve to 'help' those in the overseas colonies.

## MEDICAL PIONEERS

One field where it is possible to see a black presence in Edwardian times was medicine. Doctors of African descent were employed in hospital wards and pioneering medical advances, including James Samuel Risien Russell. A physician and neurologist, he became one of Britain's first black consultants and could be heard speaking on epilepsy at the British Medical Association's annual conference in 1910. Allan Glaisyer Minns, born in the Bahamas, was a successful doctor who went on to be elected to the town council of Thetford, Norfolk, and, in 1904, was the first black man to become a mayor in Britain. In dentistry, Walter Tull's brother, Edward Tull Warnock, became one of the first black qualified dentists in 1912, which, considering that the average person at the time would have rarely seen a qualified dentist at all, was a remarkable feat.

The black people who lived, worked and advanced Edwardian Britain are so much more than historical footnotes. They contributed heavily to the innovations that defined the period, and beyond adding to the story of Britain in a way that has often gone unacknowledged, yet can no longer be ignored.

**LOLA JAYE** is a historical fiction writer and public speaker. Her latest novel is *The Attic Child* (Pan Macmillan, 2022), partly set in Edwardian Britain

## EDWARDIAN LEADERS OF PAN-AFRICANISM

During the Edwardian era, the cause of Pan-Africanism – a movement encouraging all those of African descent to unite – was championed by a number of key figures. By then, the African Association (formed in 1897) had become the Pan-African Association, and had held, in 1900, its inaugural conference in London.

A momentous event over three days, it laid foundations for a global movement as eminent activists gathered to discuss the inequalities faced by black people. Members established the association's objectives as, among other things, securing "civil and political rights for Africans and their descendants throughout the world", and working to "ameliorate the condition of the oppressed negro".

Here are some of the figures who were instrumental in the growth of Pan-Africanism in Britain...

### HENRY SYLVESTER WILLIAMS

◀ A Trinidadian lawyer, activist and writer who travelled widely to promote solidarity among black people, Williams co-founded the African Association in 1897. In 1903, he became the first black lawyer to practise in Cape Town, South Africa, and, three years later, one of the first two black councillors in Britain.

### ALICE KINLOCH

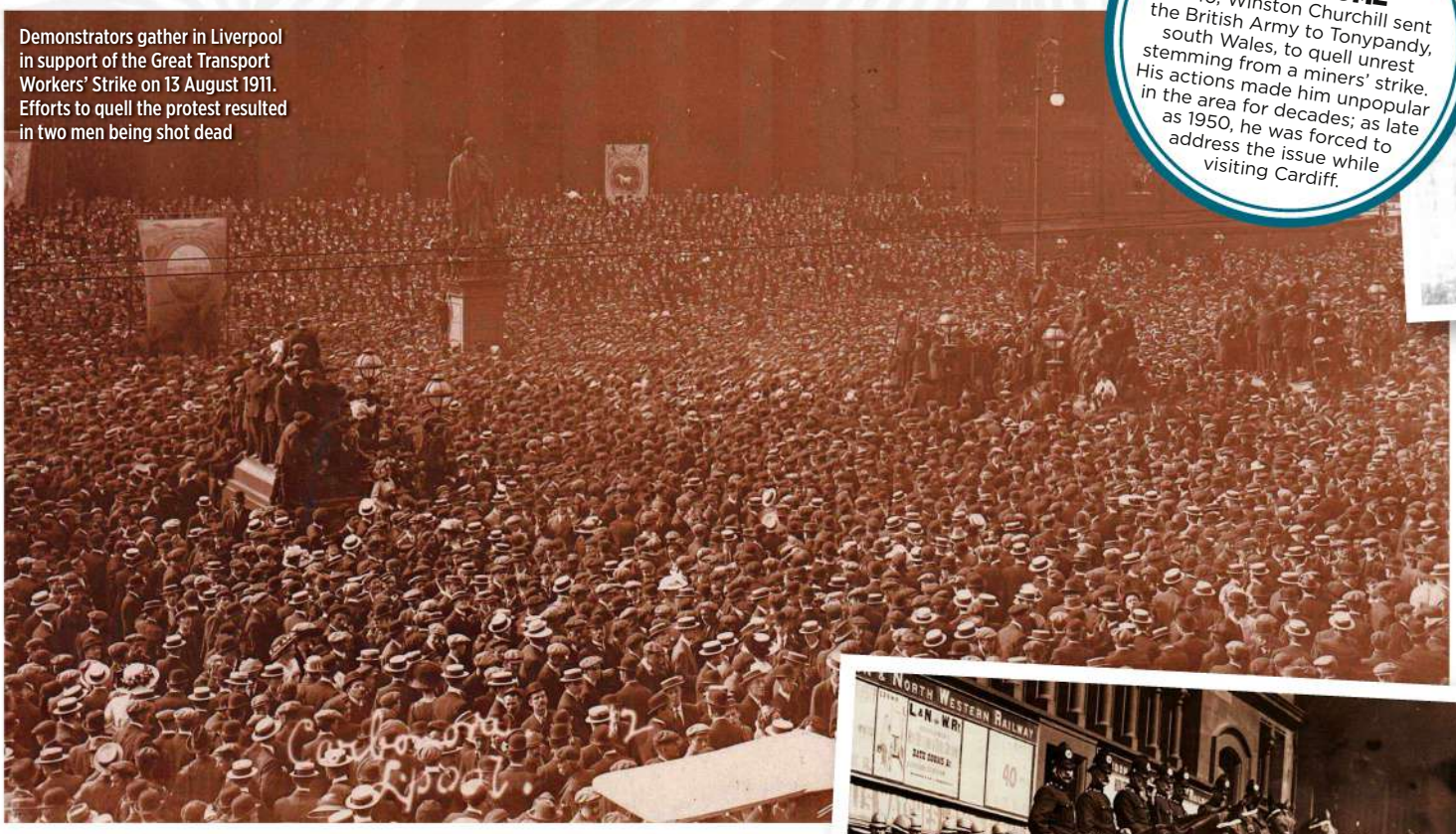
Along with Williams, the South African activist was a co-founder of what would become the Pan-African Association and organiser of its first conference. She was an influential figure in British politics at a time when it was not seen as 'a woman's place', but, as was the fate of many women, her deeds were written out of history and nearly lost altogether.

### JOHN ALCINDOR

◀ Earning his medical degree in 1899, the Trinidad-born doctor carried out and published vital research on cancer, tuberculosis, influenza and syphilis, which suggested links with poverty, unbalanced diets and health inequalities. He went on, in the 1920s, to be president of the African Progress Union.

### JOHN RICHARD ARCHER

▶ In 1913, Archer became the first black man to be elected mayor of a London borough. In his acceptance speech before taking up the post in Battersea, he said: "I am a man of colour... I am proud to be... My election tonight marks a new era. You have made history tonight."

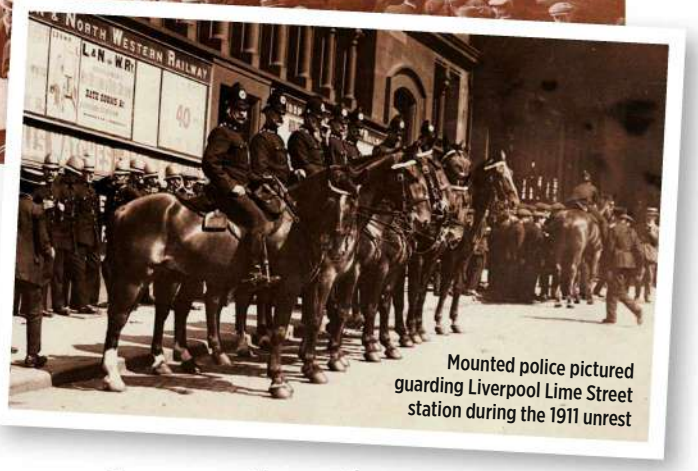


Demonstrators gather in Liverpool in support of the Great Transport Workers' Strike on 13 August 1911. Efforts to quell the protest resulted in two men being shot dead

**DID YOU KNOW?**

**NOT WELCOME**

In 1910, Winston Churchill sent the British Army to Tonypandy, south Wales, to quell unrest stemming from a miners' strike. His actions made him unpopular in the area for decades; as late as 1950, he was forced to address the issue while visiting Cardiff.




Mounted police pictured guarding Liverpool Lime Street station during the 1911 unrest

# WORKERS AT WAR

## In 1911, overworked and underpaid Britons downed tools and led the biggest industrial dispute the nation had ever seen

As acts of futility go, the task that a magistrate named Stuart Deacon was asked to perform on 13 August 1911 takes some beating. Deacon was charged with reading the riot act to a vast crowd of strikers that had descended on the area around St George's Hall in central Liverpool. His words were, in effect, the authorities' last-minute bid to persuade the demonstrators to disperse and return to their homes peacefully.

The crowd, however, was in no mood to listen – perhaps 80,000 of them had taken to the streets in support of what was being described as the "Great Transport Workers' Strike". What followed was one of the most violent episodes in the history of British industrial relations.

No sooner had Deacon addressed his restive audience than fighting broke out between police and the protesters. As members of the Warwickshire Regiment stood by waiting for the order to go into action, mounted police waded into the crowd. By the end of the day, hundreds required treatment for their injuries.

Two days later, things got even worse. When protesters threw bricks at vans carrying strikers to prison, soldiers guarding the convoy opened fire, killing two men. It was a bloody end to a strike that truly shocked the nation. Yet it was far from an anomaly.

### GRINDING TO A HALT

Today, World War I dominates histories of the early 20th century. Yet before Britain was pitched into that calamity it experienced a period of unprecedented strike action, as workers up and down the country agitated for better pay and working conditions by downing tools and walking out. Such was the scale of the industrial action that this period from 1911–14 is known as the Great Unrest.

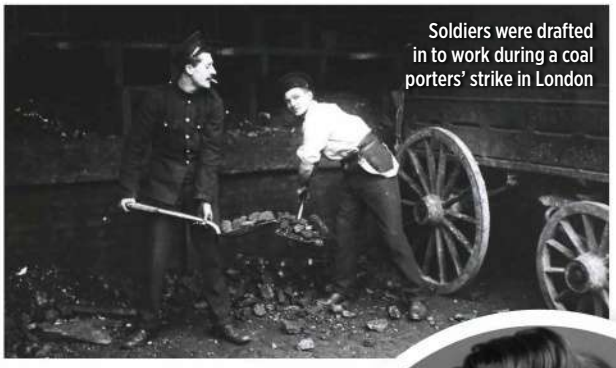
The numbers speak for themselves. In 1909, 2.7 million working days were lost to strikes; by 1912, that number had skyrocketed to 41 million. There were an eye-watering 3,000 strikes between 1911 and 1914. With the wheels of industry grinding to a halt again and again, *The Times* went as far to label the miners' strike of 1912, "The greatest catastrophe that has threatened the country since the Spanish Armada."

Few industries were unaffected by the action. In January 1914, Londoners

GETTY IMAGES X6, ALAMY X2

Victorious Labour MPs at the 1906 general election included leader Keir Hardie (*third from right*) and future prime minister Ramsay MacDonald (*third from left*)

The disruption triggered by the Great Transport Workers' Strike meant that some rail passengers ended up riding in freight cars normally used to carry milk



Soldiers were drafted in to work during a coal porters' strike in London

shivered as coal porters walked out in search of increased pay. The previous month, a strike of Leeds corporation workmen had plunged the city into darkness. *The Times* reported how, at one school in Deptford, pupils "organised a demonstration outside the school, and amused the neighbourhood by shouting 'We are on strike'."

When, in 1911, a national railway strike forced significant concessions out of the government, home secretary Winston Churchill lamented: "The men have beaten us. We cannot keep the trains running. There is nothing we can do. We are done!"

The authorities weren't "done", of course. But they were certainly wrong footed. The establishment may not have seen it coming, but the Great Unrest was a storm a long time in the brewing.

The turn of the 20th century was a time of enormous volatility for the British economy. As inflation rose, and wages failed to keep pace, thousands of workers found themselves plunged into severe poverty. And so they turned to the trade union movement to secure fair pay from what they saw as grasping employers.

Over the past half century, Britain's trade unions had been transformed from a network of small organisations to huge, sophisticated entities with the resources to lobby companies, run PR campaigns and pursue their grievances in the courts.

## POLITICAL UPHEAVAL

By the late Victorian era, this added professionalism had secured the trade union movement a series of high profile victories, none more celebrated than the matchworkers' strike of 1888, when a group of young women employed at the Bryant & May factory in east London secured better working conditions.

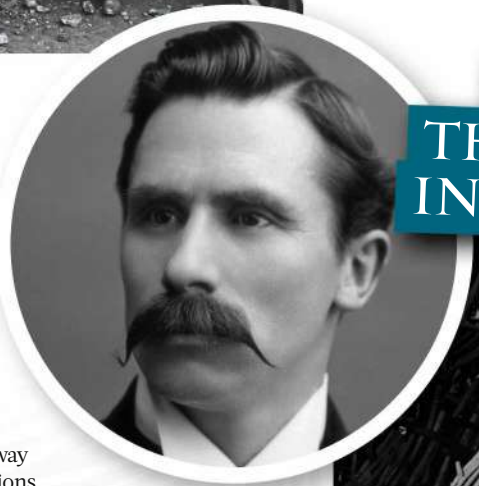
Such successes made the movement a powerful player in Britain's political firmament. And one way to exert this power was via the ballot box. The general election of 1906 saw the Labour Party (then known as the Labour Representation Committee) increase their number of seats in Westminster from two to 29, with their MPs essentially viewed as the trade union movement's representatives in parliament. It was a landmark moment in the history of industrial relations, but one that came with expectations  expectations that these MPs would deliver results for Britain's workforce.

By the end of first decade of the 20th century, some in the labour movement were beginning to conclude that the Labour MPs weren't delivering. Men like the leading trade unionist Tom Mann were increasingly attracted by syndicalism, an ideology that cleaved to the belief that better pay and conditions for the masses was best achieved by workforce organisation rather than parliamentary politics.

The extraordinary spike in strike action from 1911  14 is testament to how persuasive the syndicalists were. The increasing force that the authorities exerted against the strikers is testament to how rattled the establishment was by Mann's ideology.

In his book *The Strange Death of Liberal England*, the historian George Dangerfield wrote that the working class of this period "took a revolutionary course and might have reached a revolutionary conclusion". With the dread spectre of regime change casting a long shadow and Conservative MPs talking of the need to deploy martial law to defeat "socialist trade unionism", the authorities' response took a more punitive turn. Gunboats were moored in the Mersey as the Liverpool transport workers' strike of 1911 played out, two men were shot dead by soldiers in Llanelli during a railway workers' strike, and Tom Mann was charged with inciting mutiny among soldiers and sentenced to six months' imprisonment.

**WORDS: SPENCER MIZEN**



ABOVE: **Trade unionist Tom Mann was chairman of the Liverpool strike committee**

"THOUSANDS OF WORKERS FOUND THEMSELVES PLUNGED INTO SEVERE POVERTY"

RIGHT: **Chairmakers also downed tools during the Great Unrest**

DR JOHN JACOB WOOLF ON THE LEGACY OF THE EDWARDIAN ERA

# It can appear as a 'golden age' – and one subject to much mythology

**DR JOHN JACOB WOOLF** is an author, historian and co-writer of the Audible series *Stephen Fry's Edwardian Secrets* and *Stephen Fry's Victorian Secrets*. His first book was *The Wonders: Lifting the Curtain on the Freak Show, Circus and Victorian Age* (Michael O'Mara, 2019)

The Edwardian era evokes images of country houses, garden parties and croquet on the lawn; an era where the sun shone brightly as gentlemen and ladies in decorated picture hats sipped tea and nibbled on sandwiches. It is an era that has cascaded into our own through popular cultural productions such as *My Fair Lady*, *Mary Poppins* and *Downton Abbey*. It can appear as a 'golden age'; an age of warmth and cosiness and one subject to much mythology.

The era, which takes its name from the corpulent King Edward VII, was sandwiched between the Victorian age (1837 1901) and World War I (1914 18), emerging as a seemingly quieter period compared to the momentous industrialisation of the 19th century and the global slaughter that followed. It was also a relatively short era, giving the period a pithiness that has contributed to its relative historical neglect.

But there is much to be gleaned from the period, which both discredits the myths and recentres the age in our own understanding of today. For starters, the Edwardian era like the epochs before and after was not mono ethnically white. At the apex of the imperial age, and at a time when racism was rife, black Edwardians were intimately part of British life. At the same time, large scale Jewish migration to Britain led to greater levels of anti Semitism and the advent of the explicitly anti immigration Aliens Act in 1905. Famously, the Edwardian era also saw the campaign for women's suffrage gather violent momentum, while the labour movement became increasingly more vocal and active.

It was, therefore, an era of radicalism. Socialism, anarchism, republicanism and syndicalism sought to disrupt the order of things, while the state recognised, however conservatively, that interventionist welfare policies were necessary to address the vast levels of inequality.

This sense of change and disruption permeated all areas of society whether through momentous technological advancements, the rise of eugenics, new understandings about sex and gender, or the increasingly precarious position of the landed gentry leading many people to long for the past or fret about the future.

There was, of course, some sunniness amid the tumult: fresh opportunities for women, the creation of the world's first ever garden city [Letchworth in Hertfordshire], a new focus on childhood, rising literacy levels and growing forms of fun in sports and cinema. Yet there were also dark clouds forming on the international horizon, which brought the stormy Edwardian era to a tragic close.

Stripped of the mythology, then, the Edwardian era echoes into our own in politics, culture, international struggles and the fight for equality with a legacy that still defines the struggles of today.

There was some sunniness amid the tumult of the Edwardian era, argues Dr John Jacob Woolf

GETTY IMAGES X1, ALAMY X1

# GET HOOKED

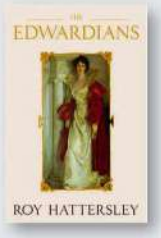
If we've whetted your appetite for the Edwardian era, why not explore the topic further with our pick of books, films, podcasts and TV and radio programmes?

## BOOKS

**Bertie: A Life of Edward VII**

**By Prof Jane Ridley (Chatto & Windus, 2012)**

Professor Jane Ridley explores the life of 'Bertie' – from his power struggles with his mother, Queen Victoria, to his passion for foreign policy – while painting a vivid portrait of the age in all its excess and eccentricity.




**The Edwardians: Biography of the Edwardian Age**

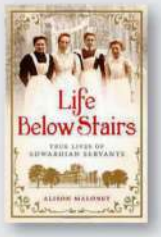
**By Roy Hattersley (Little, Brown, 2004)**

Former Labour MP Roy Hattersley explores the achievements and indulgences of the Edwardian age – from new advances in technology to the work of authors such as Rudyard Kipling and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

**The Age of Decadence: Britain 1880 to 1914**

**By Simon Heffer (Random House, 2017)**

Simon Heffer exposes the contradictions of late-Victorian and Edwardian Britain, exploring how, beneath the surface of a vast empire and expanding comforts, there lay profound doubts about Britain's imperial destiny.




**Life Below Stairs: True Lives of Edwardian Servants**

**By Alison Maloney (Michael O'Mara, 2011)**

Using first-hand stories from domestic staff of the time, author and journalist Alison Maloney investigates the secrets, scandals, trials and tribulations that took place in the great houses of the Edwardian period.

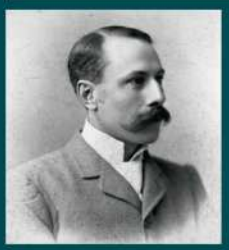
## ON THE BBC

BBC RADIO 4

**▶ The Long View: The London Olympics in 1908 and 2012**

*bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/b01ky5r5*

First aired in the run-up to the opening ceremony of the 2012 Olympic Games, Jonathan Freedland looks at the first London Games of 1908.



BBC

**▶ Discovering Elgar**

*bbc.co.uk/programmes/p01lfm9n*

A range of programmes examining the life and works of composer Edward Elgar – from the landscapes that inspired him, to the impact of World War I.

BBC SOUNDS

**▶ Princess**

*bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/p0cjqwlv*

Anita Anand, actor Anji Mohindra and Dr Priya Atwal explore the story of Sophia Duleep Singh: the daughter of a deposed maharaja, goddaughter of Queen Victoria and a militant suffragette.

## ONLINE AND AUDIO

**▶ For podcasts, features, quizzes, interviews and more on the Edwardians, visit our website: *historyextra.com/period/edwardian***

**▶ Stephen Fry's Edwardian Secrets (Audible)**

Co-written by Dr John Jacob Woolf, this 12-episode series uncovers some of the startling and unexpected hidden histories of the Edwardians. Listen at *adbl.co/3z2elnhx*

**▶ Trade unions: everything you wanted to know (HistoryExtra)**

Mark Crail answers listener questions about the history of Britain's trade union movement and the fight for workers' rights. Listen at *bit.ly/3uGRivW*

**▶ The Edwardians: everything you wanted to know (HistoryExtra)**

Dr John Jacob Woolf answers listener questions on life in Edwardian Britain. Listen at *bit.ly/3IBg46d*

## WATCH

**Downton Abbey**

**(streaming on various platforms)**

ITV's period drama chronicles events in the lives of the fictional Crawley family and their servants between 1912 and 1926, with the very first episode set immediately after the sinking of *Titanic*.

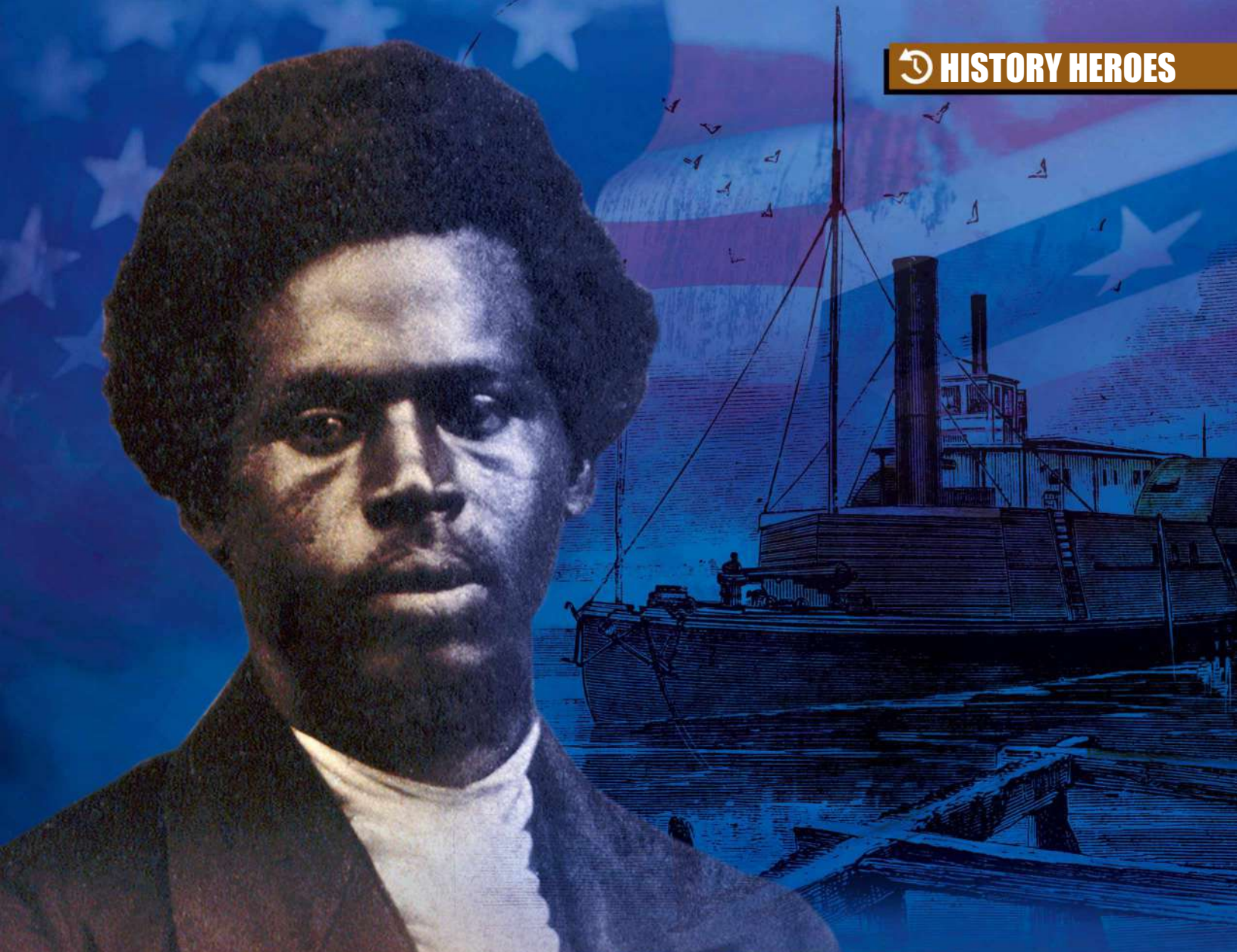
**Edward the Seventh**

**(available on DVD)**

This Bafta-award winning, much-acclaimed series from 1975 explores the life of 'Bertie' – from playboy prince to eventual king. Timothy West takes the role of the elder Edward VII.

GETTY IMAGES X4, ALAMY X2

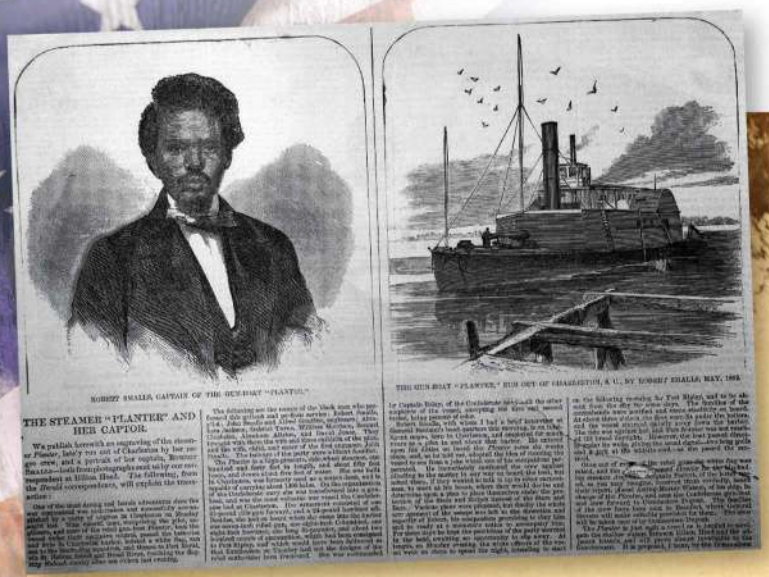
THE ROYAL MINT®
THE ORIGINAL MAKER
NGC
NGCcoin.com/verify
Consign Your Coins to
a Royal Mint Auction
If you are looking to sell your coin or coin collection, The Royal Mint's Collector Services team can help you find them a new home. By consigning your coins to The Royal Mint's regular auctions, you can reach a wide audience of potential buyers and make sure you get a fair price, with competitive selling fees, often as low as 0%.
To find out more, visit royalmint.com/consignments
royalmint.com
CELEBRATE | COLLECT | INVEST | SECURE | DISCOVER

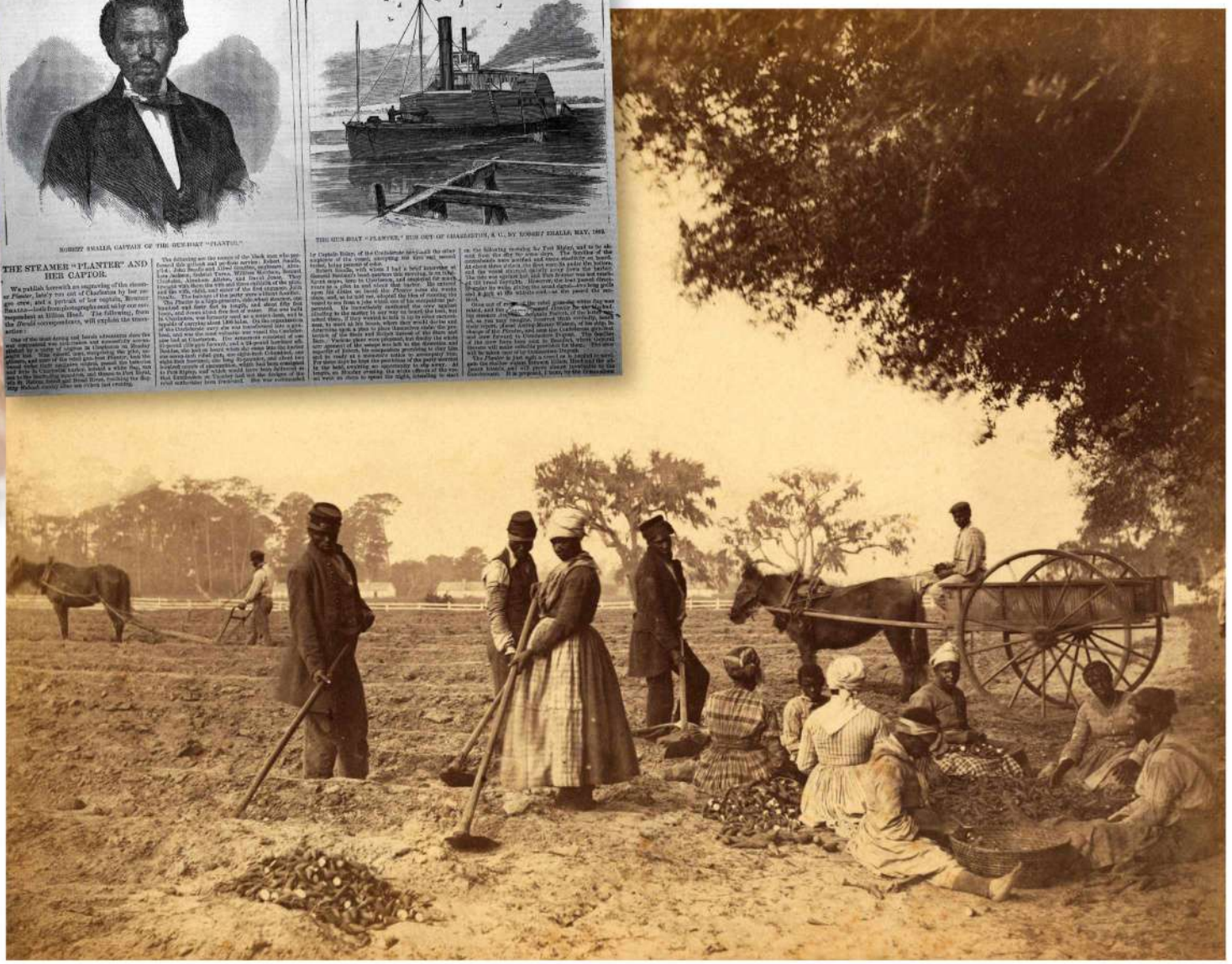


# THE SLAVE WHO STOLE A SHIP AND SAILED TO FREEDOM

Robert Smalls pulled off one of the most courageous escapes from slavery in history, writes **Jonny Wilkes**, and followed that by becoming a war hero and trailblazing politician

GETTY IMAGES X3



The steamship slowly drifted across the harbour, as quietly as the paddlewheels slapping against the water and the chugging and grinding of the engine allowed. A fog helped to hide them, and those on board knew it was imperative to stay inconspicuous. They were on a secret and dangerous journey that dark May night, one that could change their lives or end them. While there were no officers, a man in the captain's coat and hat stood on the deck. His name was Robert Smalls, and on this stolen ship he intended to sail himself and everyone below decks to freedom from slavery.

Smalls had been born into slavery 23 years earlier, on 5 April 1839, to a domestic named Lydia Polite in Beaufort, South Carolina. He actually had it easier, relatively, than the other enslaved children possibly since his master, Henry McKee, may have been his father but his mother wanted him to understand the horrors faced by black people in the United States. Her harsh lessons included putting him to work in the fields and forcing him to witness a whipping.

The man planning to commandeer a 150 feet sidewheel steamship, the CSS *Planter*, was shaped by these experiences. He was also one of the best pilots in the harbour, who knew the waters so well that he could navigate the sandbars and shallows even in the dark. This would be handy as his escape would be in the early hours. While his white officers had refused to call him a pilot, instead using the term 'wheelman' for a slave, Smalls was plotting to be the captain on his own voyage. He would be escaping Charleston.

## FAMILY COMMITMENTS

Smalls had been 12 when his master first sent him to the town. Over the years, he worked a number of jobs, from waiter at a fancy hotel to a rigger and stevedore, before being enlisted on the crew of the *Planter*. Smalls enjoyed being near the water and, what's more, he was allowed to keep around $1 a week. Showing some entrepreneurial spirit, he also sold fruit, candy and tobacco on the docks, and managed to save $100. He had hoped to use it to buy his freedom.

Instead, all hopes laid in escaping on the *Planter* on the night of 12/13 May 1862. It began when the three officers went ashore despite going against regulations, they did this often leaving the slave crew alone. Smalls had been waiting for this moment and told the others to be ready. Only two didn't stay with him. They got the boiler started, but before steaming for open water the ship had to make a pre arranged rendezvous, which required heading as slowly and quietly as possible in the other direction. There, they would pick up their families, including Smalls' wife and children.

It was in Charleston that he had married another enslaved person named Hannah and had a daughter, Elizabeth. While permitted to live together, there was a constant fear that any one of them could be sold at any moment and they

ABOVE: **Slaves at work in a sweet potato field in South Carolina, 1862. Robert Smalls' mother, Lydia, sent her son to a plantation so he could understand the plight of enslaved rural workers**

TOP LEFT: **Smalls' efforts to escape the Confederate South on board the CSS *Planter* attracted widespread press coverage across the North**

GETTY IMAGES X6

would be separated. Smalls approached Hannah's master Samuel Kingman to buy his wife and child himself. The price was $800, and the birth of their second child, Robert Jr, would only make it more expensive. Hannah agreed with Smalls that their best chance of staying together was to escape, declaring, "I will go, for where you die, I will die."

## CLOSE ENCOUNTERS

With a total of 16 enslaved men, women and children on board, the *Planter* turned around and started the most dangerous leg of its journey. If captured, everyone faced severe punishment, if not death, as runaways. The noise and smoke of the engine negated any chance of getting through Charleston Harbor without being spotted, so Smalls knew the ship had to appear as if on a routine patrol. That meant passing four military checkpoints, plus armed gun batteries on the shore, all capable of blowing the *Planter* out of the water.

The reason for this weaponry was that the American Civil War had been raging for 13 months, with Charleston a crucial port for the South. The North had imposed a naval blockade of the whole Confederate coastline, however, so Union ships were anchored just a few miles away. Smalls knew this, since the *Planter* had become an armed dispatch vessel carry munitions for the army. At the time of his escape, it had four cannons and 200 pounds of ammunition in its stores.

Smalls therefore aimed to escape from slavery, taking others with him, in the middle of a war and in a ship that he could hand over to the enemy. He had spent the last year learning all he could of how the *Planter* functioned and what signals he needed for the checkpoints. On the night, he dressed in the captain's coat and straw hat and even mimicked his walk so that he could stand on deck and, from a distance, look the part.

**"He dressed in the captain's coat and straw hat, and even mimicked his walk so that he could look the part"**

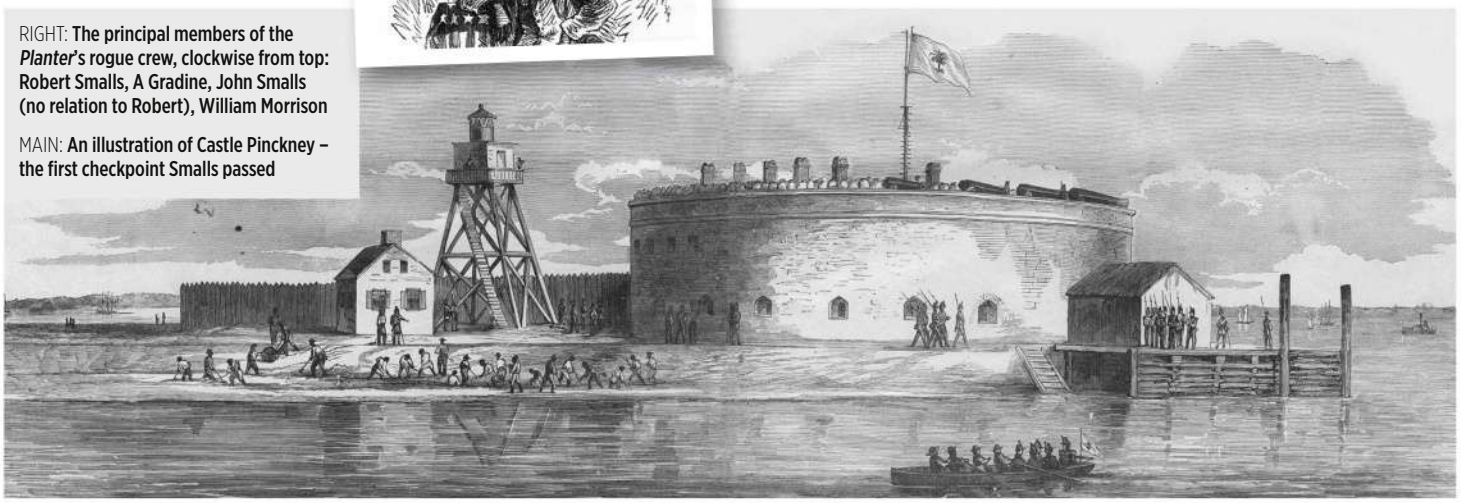
The *Planter* passed three checkpoints Castle Pinckney, Fort Ripley and Fort Johnson without incident, but the last checkpoint was Fort Sumter: an intimidating fortress on an artificial island with high walls and plenty of firepower. The rest of the crew wanted to take a wide arc around; Smalls argued this would be more suspicious and sailed right towards it. At around 4.15am, he gave the signal and, a few moments later, received the all clear. As they sailed on by, he gave a burst of the ship's whistle as a "farewell to the Confederacy".

There was one last danger. The Union blockade could fire on the *Planter*, an enemy ship, especially if flying ▶

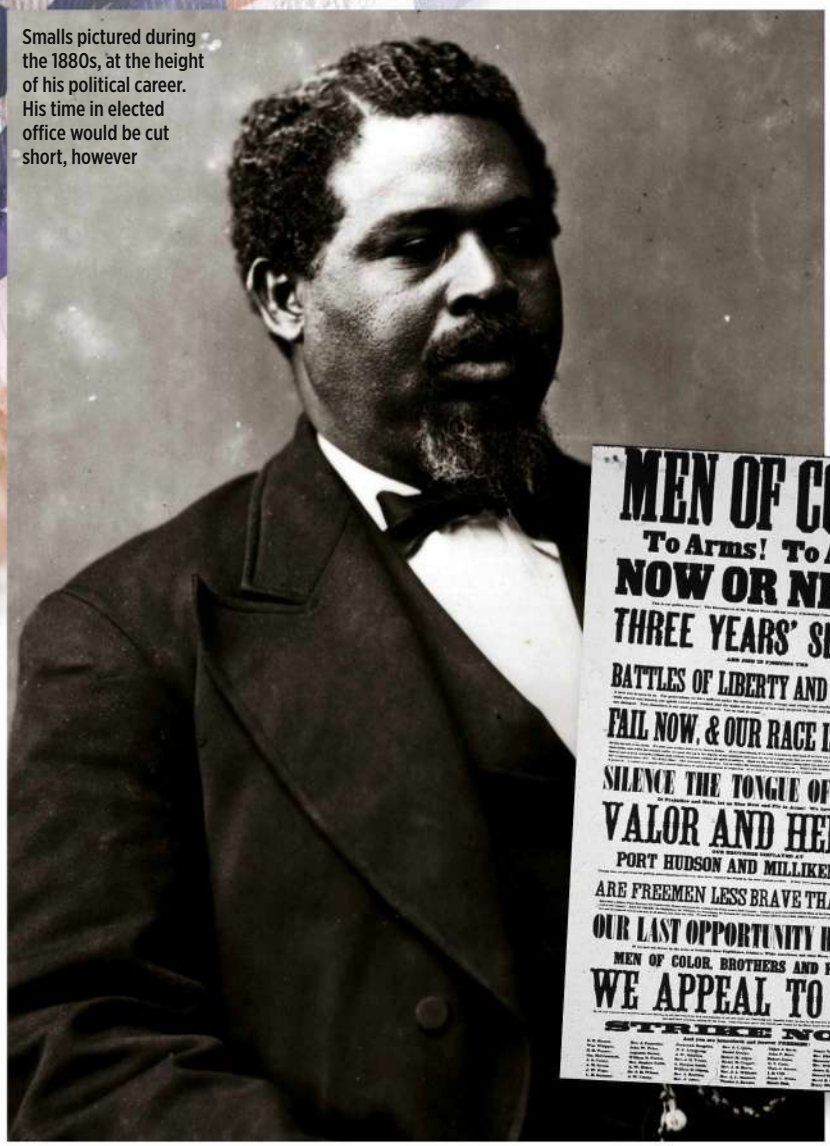
The *Planter* also passed Fort Johnson without incident

RIGHT: **The principal members of the *Planter*'s rogue crew, clockwise from top: Robert Smalls, A Gradine, John Smalls (no relation to Robert), William Morrison**

MAIN: **An illustration of Castle Pinckney – the first checkpoint Smalls passed**



The final checkpoint was Fort Sumter, where the first shots of the American Civil War had been fired in 1861



Smalls pictured during the 1880s, at the height of his political career. His time in elected office would be cut short, however

ABOVE: **The house Smalls owned in Beaufort, South Carolina – previously the property of his master, Henry McKee**

LEFT: **A recruitment poster urges black men to fight for the Union, promising they will forever be free if they "strike now"**

BELOW: **About 180,000 black soldiers served in the US Army, around half of whom were former slaves from the South**

GETTY IMAGES X5, ALAMY X2

◀ the Confederate flag. Smalls had overlooked this. It was hastily lowered and replaced by a white flag made of bedsheets. The *Planter* then approached the USS *Onward* and, after a few tense minutes, Smalls was able to explain what was happening to the amazement of the Union sailors. As the other slaves appeared on deck and started celebrating, he turned over the ship with the words, "I am delivering this war material including these cannons and I think Uncle Abraham Lincoln can put them to good use."

## LIBERATION AT LAST

Smalls had delivered more than a ship: he had brought himself, his family and a dozen others from slavery. Newspapers and magazines spread the news of his escape in the North, where he was hailed as a war hero. For capturing the *Planter*, Smalls received a reward of $1,500. Such was his fame that he met with President Lincoln and may well have inspired the decision to let black soldiers join the Union Army (*see box on page 61*). In the South, a bounty was put on his head.

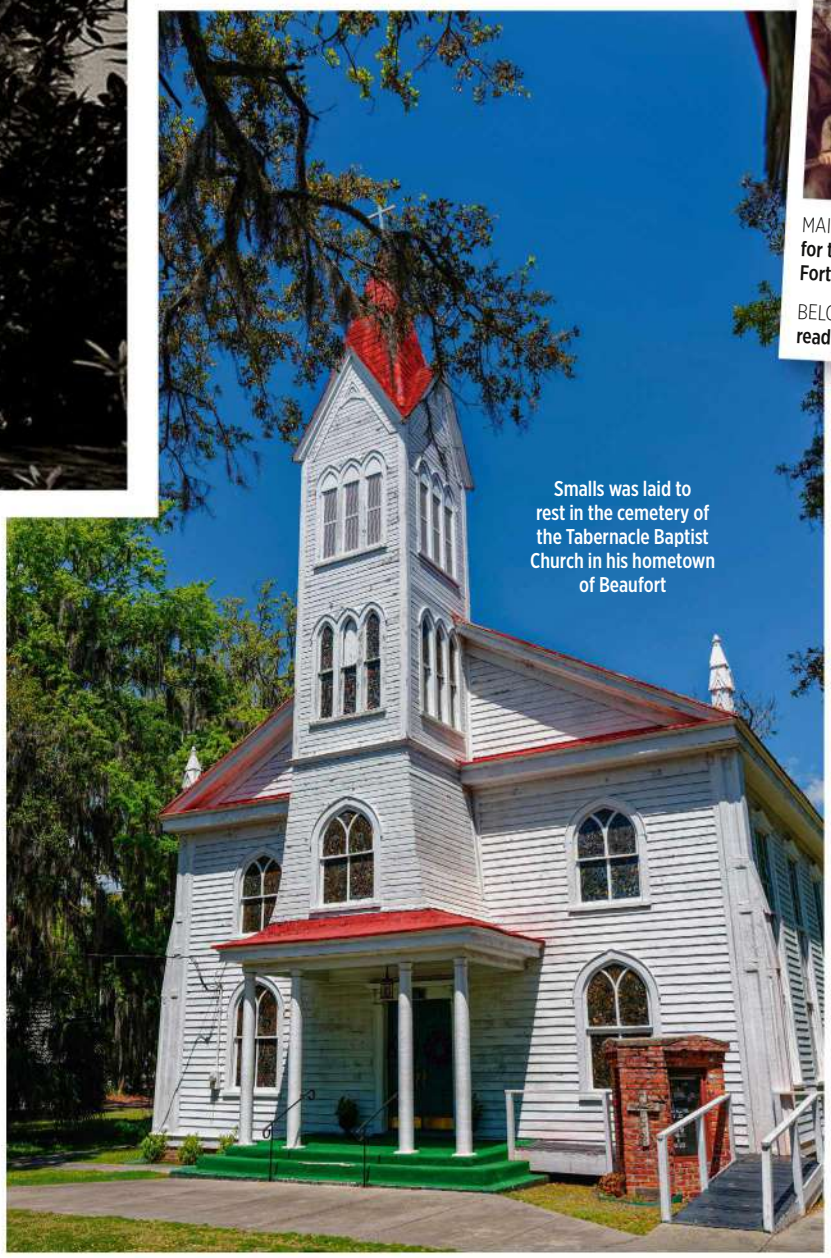
**"Smalls had delivered more than a ship: he had brought himself, his family and a dozen others from slavery"**

This was not the end of Smalls' story, but the beginning of his life as a freeman. And the first thing he did was to join the Union fight. He served in numerous naval engagements, including when he piloted an ironclad (an armour plated warship) and helped remove the mines that he had been made to lay for the Confederates. Ultimately, Smalls distinguished himself enough to be given, fittingly enough, command of the now USS *Planter*, making him the first black captain of a ship in US service.

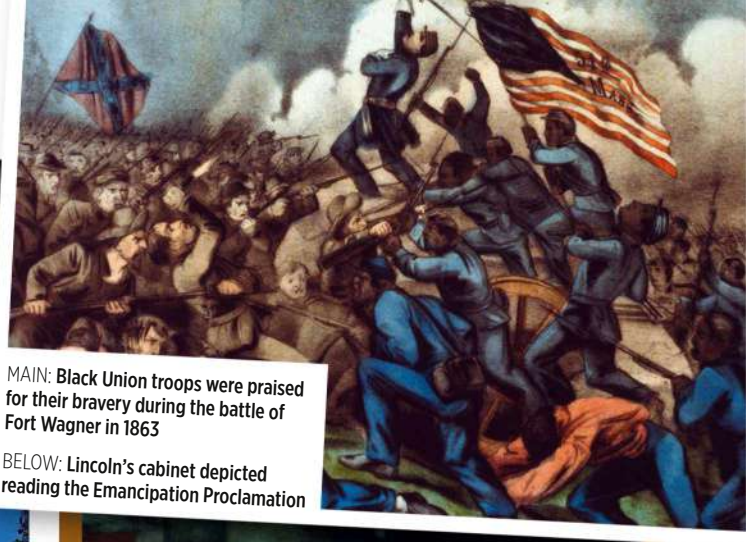
At the end of the Civil War, he chose not to build his new life in the North. Instead, he returned to South Carolina, where he had been enslaved. Learning to read and write, he became a prominent businessman, set up a store for freed people, established a school for black children, and started a newspaper. He also ended his military career with the rank of major general in the state militia.

## CONTINUING THE FIGHT

The Reconstruction period after the war opened the door to the political arena to black men for the first time, and Smalls was among the first to walk through it. From 1868, he served in the South Carolina House of Representatives, before becoming a member of the Senate in 1870. By then, he had already shown his willingness to fight for black rights: when removed from an all white streetcar in Philadelphia in 1864, he organised a mass boycott that led to integration on public transport within three years. As a politician, he helped draft a new state

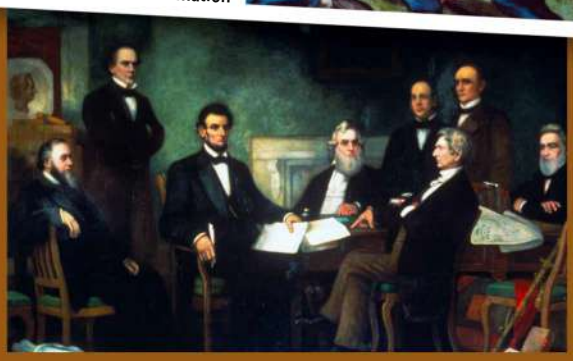


Smalls was laid to rest in the cemetery of the Tabernacle Baptist Church in his hometown of Beaufort



MAIN: **Black Union troops were praised for their bravery during the battle of Fort Wagner in 1863**

BELOW: **Lincoln's cabinet depicted reading the Emancipation Proclamation**



constitution, founded the Republican Party of South Carolina, and campaigned for social services and education.

In 1874, Smalls was elected to the US House of Representatives, and served a number of non consecutive terms. But the promise of Reconstruction that black people could find a place in the US as citizens able to vote encapsulated in the 14th and 15th Amendments was shortlived. White southerners stripped away black rights, introduced restrictive laws, and launched attacks on black politicians. Smalls faced trumped up charges of corruption and bribery for which he was sentenced to three years in prison, although ultimately pardoned.

Disenfranchisement was all but complete by the end of the 19th century, so it was in one of his last acts before losing his political position that Smalls spoke at the South Carolina constitutional convention of 1895. His words: "My race needs no special defence, for the past history of them in this country proves them to be the equal of any people anywhere. All they need is an equal chance in the battle of life."

That optimism never deserted him, nor his kindness. What better proof of that than the house in Beaufort where Smalls lived out his days until his death in 1915, aged 75. He had bought it shortly after the Civil War, and he would occasionally have an elderly woman suffering from dementia come to the door believing that she lived there. That house had formerly belonged to Henry McKee, his former master, and that woman, who Smalls welcomed in and cared for, was McKee's wife. The legacy of slavery in the US is deeply painful and traumatic, but, in more ways than one, Smalls managed to escape.

## BLACK SOLDIERS OF THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

### Freemen and runaway slaves not only fought for the Union they fought prejudice within the Union, too

When President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation on 1 January 1863, it not only freed more than 3 million slaves in the Confederate South, but it also allowed black men to fight for the North by enlisting in the Union Army. By the end of the war, around 180,000 had joined the army and another 20,000 had joined the navy, forming around one-tenth of Union forces.

Those in the army served in segregated regiments, the United States Colored Troops, and while there were certainly tales of extraordinary bravery in battle – such as the 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry at Fort Wagner – they tended not to be trusted by white officers to be fighting men. There was also the greater risk they faced if captured by the Confederates, as they could be put into slavery or at least treated far worse than their white comrades.

Until an act of Congress in June 1864, black soldiers did not receive equal pay for their service to the Union: they got $10 a month (minus $3 for their uniform) compared to the $13 for white troops. This was a hardship familiar to Robert Smalls, as he was denied a military pension of $30 per month until 1897.

**GET HOOKED**

**LISTEN**

BBC RADIO 3 Historian Professor Adam Smith examines the American Civil War in a four-part series produced for BBC Radio 3: *bbc.co.uk/sounds/series/b010bgbg*

# WHAT GREAT PAINTINGS SAY

A visual representation of the anxiety felt by the artist on a busy night in Oslo, this piece was a pivotal moment in his creative outpouring

## Evening on Karl Johan Street

by Edvard Munch, 1892

DAG FOSSE/ KODE

The wide, unblinking throng of corpse like figures crowding out of the canvas of Edvard Munch's 1892 work must surely have unnerved viewers when it was exhibited at the Berlin Secession in 1902. Indeed, the Norwegian artist had form when it came to shocking his audiences: in 1892, his exhibition on behalf of the Union of Berlin Artists had been shut down after just one week for what was described as its 'degenerate art'.

"Despite no formal artistic training, Munch started to forge a reputation as a progressive artist in the 1880s, but came in for a lot of criticism by those who saw his works as outlandish," says Dr Barnaby Wright, Daniel Katz curator of 20th century art at the Courtauld Gallery, London. "Impressionism was still in its infancy, so Munch's distinctive style distilling colour and forms, and the way he incorporated his imagination and emotions was a very new way of painting."

Indeed, *Evening on Karl Johan Street* was the first time people were confronted with the ghostly, elongated facial characteristics that are now so familiar thanks to Munch's most famous work, *The Scream*, the first version of which was painted a year later. "Munch channelled his own intense emotions and experiences into his paintings of this period," explains Wright. "This piece forms part of a series of works painted in the 1890s that Munch described as 'The Frieze of Life: A Poem about Life, Love and Death'."

Love, loss, death, anxiety and despair are all explored in the series profound themes of human existence. *Evening on Karl Johan Street*, with its crowds of expressionless people, dark, brooding colours and closely cropped figures, fell into the section labelled 'Anxiety'. Munch would later describe in his diary (which he wrote in the third person) how he had arranged to meet his lover on Karl Johans Gate, the main street in Oslo, but had become overwhelmed by the after dinner crowds.

"Everything became so empty and he felt so alone… People who passed by looked so strange and awkward and he felt as if they looked at him, stared at him, all these faces pale in the evening light," he wrote.

"Although best known for *The Scream*, it is *Evening on Karl Johan Street* that marked a turning point in Munch's career, when he began painting in the style that we have since come to associate with him," concludes Wright. "But by the early 20th century, he had changed things again, and his later works have a different kind of intensity." ⊙

**WORDS: CHARLOTTE HODGMAN**

**GET HOOKED**

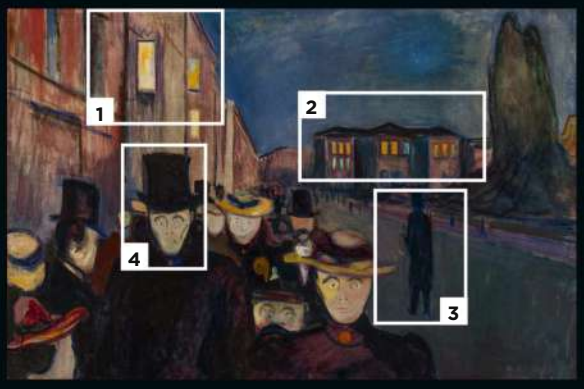
*Evening on Karl Johan Street* features in Edvard Munch: Masterpieces from Bergen, a major exhibition of the Norwegian artist's works at the Courtauld Gallery in London, which runs until 4 September 2022. Visit *courtauld.ac.uk* for more information

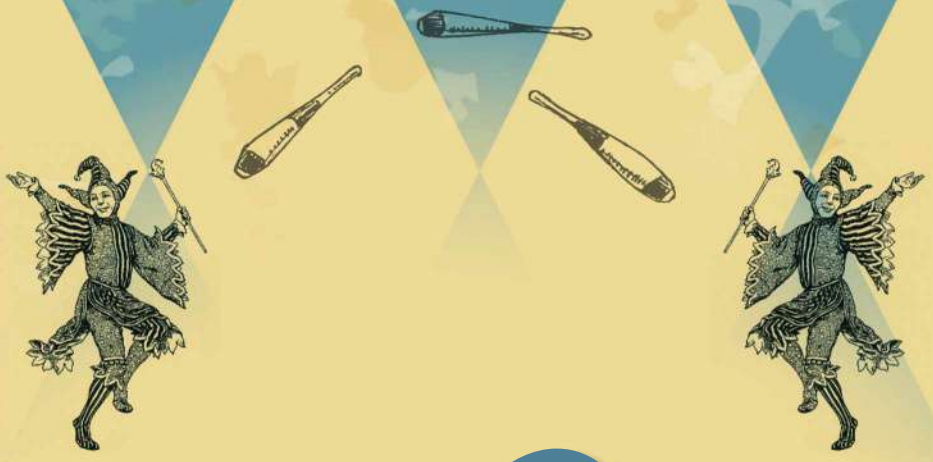
### 1. LIGHTING
There is a theory that Munch witnessed the introduction of electric lighting in Oslo (then known as Kristiania). He was certainly fascinated by the different visual effect it had to natural light. While the windows here are likely illuminated by gas, Munch's experience of electric light may be reflected in the strange, eerie faces.

### 2. SEAT OF POWER
In the background of the scene is the Storting building, the seat of Norway's parliament.

### 3. LONE FIGURE
Many art historians believe the silhouetted figure separated from the crowd and moving in the opposite direction is the artist himself as he searches for his lover.

### 4. DISTINCTIVE CHARACTERISTICS
Strikingly familiar to the face of Munch's *The Scream*, the hollow-eyed and spectral face of the top-hatted man is repeated in the figures alongside and behind him.





# ACTING THE FOOL

Bawdy jokes, songs, juggling, tumbling – and farting – was all in a day's work, but, writes **Karen Maitland**, being a medieval jester could often be a life-threatening business

GETTY IMAGES X3

ABOVE: **Fools did not just entertain – they were expected to follow their masters into battle**

LEFT: **A medieval image shows a jester, dressed in yellow, entertaining the ladies of a royal court**

When we imagine a medieval or Tudor feast, one of the first images that springs to mind may be of a jester: the wise fool running among the guests telling bawdy jokes or juggling while the minstrels strum their lutes. They may be pictured wearing colourful costumes, eccentric pointy hats and covered in jangling bells. But this is only a glimpse, and a highly romanticised one at that, of the true role and life of the jester at court.

During the 11th and 12th centuries, the title 'minstrel', meaning 'little servant', was the name given to a wide range of entertainers, from singers and musicians to jugglers, tumblers and magicians, as well as the jesters and joculators. Both men and women worked as minstrels, and if successful in finding a grateful employer they could enjoy a degree of financial success. There is a record from 1086 of a joculatrix named Adeline who owned land in Hampshire.

The title of 'follus', or 'fool', began to be mentioned in documents in the 12th century, often when a jester had been rewarded with land as payment for loyal service to their wealthy patrons. King Henry II of England presented one particular fool, Roland le Petour, with 30 acres of land probably as a retirement gift. It came with the condition that Roland return to court every year on Christmas Day to "leap, whistle and fart".

## FAME AND FORTUNE

By the 13th century, the most talented jesters were achieving superstar status, with those lucky enough to be employed by royalty being provided with their own horses and servants. Tom le Fol (Tom the Fool) performed at the marriage feast in 1297 of Edward I's daughter, Elizabeth, and was paid a fee of 50 shillings. This was a small fortune, given that a skilled thatcher at the time could have expected to earn two and a half pence a day, and the cost of a goose was one and a half pence. The following kings Edward II and Edward III had a succession of fools and called them all Robert, regardless of their given names.

Of course, the majority of the working fools were not fortunate enough to come to the attention of kings. One traveller complained that no one gave him rabbit trimmed robes or costly gifts because he could not play any instruments, or tell jokes and stories, or juggle, dance and fart a tune. It was clear that jesters had to be multi talented.

Yet even the best medieval jesters only performed occasionally: noblemen and even kings did not throw banquets on a

Jesters unable to find service with a king or noble had to travel for work

GETTY IMAGES X3, ALAMY X2

daily basis and, besides, listening to the same fool or joculator every night of the year would have become tedious. The rest of the time, they were expected to carry out other duties in the household, such as being keeper of the hounds or travelling to the markets to buy livestock to feed the family, their servants and their men at arms.

Being the personal jester of a noble or king also came with a serious health warning; they were often required to go to battle with their masters. They carried messages between the warring armies, perhaps demanding that a city surrender, or delivering terms for the release of hostages. If the enemy did not like the message, however, the jester was the first one to suffer. Going against the common view of 'don't kill the messenger', the enemy could put them to death and sometimes have their body, or severed head, hurled back to the other camp with a catapult or trebuchet.

Jesters also had vital roles in the battles themselves. During the early Middle Ages, their job was to engage in a level of psychological warfare, both boosting their own army's morale while winding up the enemy's. The night before a battle, they went around camp telling stories and singing songs; then when the two sides took up their positions, the jesters cavorted up and down the line between them on foot or horseback.

They calmed the nerves of their side by making them laugh, while demoralising the other army by calling out mocking abuse (rather like modern football fans before a match today). Some even juggled swords or lances in full sight of the enemy, taunting and baiting them until the most hot headed broke ranks and attempted to charge at the fool to avenge the insult. This served to weaken the enemy's defensive position.

**"Battlefield jesters could be put to death and their body hurled back to their camp with a catapult"**

## PREY ON THE INNOCENT

As the medieval period progressed, three distinct types of jester evolved. The first was the 'professional fool' employed by a nobleman, who were usually astute and educated. They also generally wore normal clothing rather than the classic fool's garb.

The wealthy or noble families would also adopt the second type of jester: men and women with mental illnesses or physical deformities, kept almost as pets for their amusement or under the claim that it was an act of Christian charity. Often referred to as the 'innocent fool', they were not paid and just provided with food, clothes and a place to sleep on the floor. Then when the noble family decided their fool no longer amused them, they could be dismissed, sometimes with a pension in the form ▶

Standing behind the king is Henry VIII's favourite fool, Will Somers, who went on to serve as court jester under Edward VI and Mary I (*right*)

**DID YOU KNOW?**

**JEST A QUICK WORD**

Such was Will Somers' position at court as Henry VIII's favourite fool that it was said: "He could have admittance unto his majesty's chamber and have his ear, when a great noble man, nay, a privy counsellor could not be suffered to speak with him."

**“Talented dwarf jester Jeffrey Hudson was presented at a banquet, where he leapt out from under a pie crust”**

**DID YOU KNOW?**

**EWE MUST BE JOKING**

The favourite jester of James VI of Scotland was Archibald ‘Archy’ Armstrong. Traditionally, he was a sheep stealer, but the king pardoned him after seeing his quick wit in action. He travelled to London when James became king of England in 1603.

Queen Henrietta Maria adored her jester Jeffrey Hudson enough to have this portrait done of the two of them together. It is possible that Jeffrey also had his own suit of armour (*seen above*)

of regular alms, but the reality was that many of these men and women ended their days as beggars.

The third class of jester were members of the 'fool societies' particularly popular in France. These were groups of amateurs who performed at Christmas or at fairs and festivals, and were generally the ones to don the classic costume of a hood with ears, multi coloured tunics, and bells tied to their shoes and clothes. These fools would dance and prance through the streets, some even carrying their infants on their backs.

The role of the jester continued to change during the Tudor period. By the time that Elizabeth was on the throne in the 16th century, they were beginning to move away from performing in houses to becoming comic actors on the stage. If anything, it was getting quite dangerous to be the personal jester to a royal again like when they were expected to go to battle as Jeffrey Hudson discovered. A talented 'dwarf jester', he was presented to King Charles I and his wife, Henrietta Maria in 1626 at a banquet, where he leapt out from under a pie crust to everyone's amusement.

When the Civil War loomed, the 18 inch tall Jeffrey, or Lord Minimus, travelled with the queen when she fled to the Netherlands only to return with her to England to fight for the Royalists. In spite of his small stature, he was a skilled horseman and soldier, and, ever loyal to the crown, he helped to get Henrietta Maria back to safety in France, in 1643, when the war began to intensify.

But a few months later, the brother of Lord Croft, captain of the queen's guard, insulted Jeffrey over his height. The dwarf challenged him to a duel and shot him dead, leaving the queen with no choice but to banish her beloved jester. Then on his voyage of exile, Jeffrey was captured and sold into slavery. On his return to England 25 years later if it was even the same man he had gained a foot in height and, in a further twist in 1679, he was accused of conspiracy in a Papist plot. Jeffrey was finally released in 1682 aged 63, dying shortly afterwards.

## THE LAST JESTER

One of the last ever professional jesters was Samuel Johnson, born in 1691 and called 'Maggoty' due to his pockmarked face. He danced, told jokes, acted and frolicked in most of the wealthy houses in England. With the help of his patron, the Duke of Montagu, he also put on his own play, having cast himself in the lead role of Lord Flame. By all accounts the play was dire, but was nevertheless staged more than 30 times at London's Haymarket Theatre.

Maggoty believed he was an excellent singer, although he usually performed facing away from the audience as they would laugh at the peculiar expressions he pulled. Or, at least, he believed that was the cause of their giggling. When he died in 1773, aged 82, his friends buried him in the woods in an empty tomb he had originally designed for his much loved female servant. Maggoty asked not to be in the local churchyard due to his dislike of a quarrelsome old woman buried there, joking that on the day of resurrection she would pick a fight over his leg bones.

The site of his burial in Cheshire is now called Maggoty Wood. Visitors can read the original inscription on the tomb praising his talents, as well as a rather nasty addition in 1851 in the form of rhyming couplets: "*If chance has brought thee here, or curious eyes / To see the spot where the poor jester lies / A thoughtless jester even in his death / Uttering his jibes beyond his latest breath.*"

It is a typically stern Victorian warning to those who play the fool, and the message was clear. The days of the court jester were well and truly over.

ABOVE: **The Duke of Montagu – patron of 18th-century jester 'Maggoty' Johnson**

MIDDLE: **Johnson's final resting place in Gawsworth, Cheshire**

TOP: **Jesters, such as the dwarf seen stirring the punch bowl in this festive image, were often a hit at Christmas**

**KAREN MAITLAND** is a historical novelist, specialising in medieval fiction. *Traitor in the Ice*, the second book in her historical crime trilogy, set in the aftermath of the Gunpowder Plot, was published in March 2022 by Headline

GETTY IMAGES X3, ALAMY X3, ADAM KEPPEL-GREEN/GAWSWORTH PARISH COUNCIL X1

# WHAT IF... ARCHDUKE FRANZ FERDINAND HADN'T BEEN ASSASSINATED?

**Professor Paul Miller-Melamed** and **Nige Tassell** question the mythologised importance of the Sarajevo assassination over the last century, and whether it really made World War I inevitable

This is not an uncommon question; historians have chewed it over for more than a century now. At its heart is the notion that had the heir to the Austro Hungarian empire, Archduke Franz Ferdinand, not been shot dead by Gavrilo Princip on 28 June 1914 indeed, had he and his wife Sophie not visited Sarajevo, capital of Austrian occupied Bosnia, on that weekend then World War I would never have happened.

Without the Sarajevo assassination triggering a chain of events that led to the declaration of war a month later, years of bloodshed and slaughter could have been avoided and Europe would likely have been a very different place during the 20th century. Paul Miller Melamed, associate professor of history at McDaniel College in Maryland, sees this endless conjecture as largely optimistic in nature. "Most paint a positive trajectory. For example, the multinational Austro Hungarian empire might have eventually unified with Germany in some form of customs union," he says. "Then these central European powers could have constituted the seedbed for today's European Union, a union forged not in two world wars, but in peaceful economic interests."

## TRIGGERING A WAR?

There are a number of other things that would have been different had there been no war. Firstly, there would have been no Hitler or Mussolini coming to power as a result of the grievances arising from the war's peace treaties, and there would have been no Bolshevik revolution in Russia, and so no Lenin or Stalin. "The only thing that I feel at liberty to say about subsequent events is that they could not have been any worse," asserts Professor Miller Melamed. "It's simply impossible for me to imagine Europe following a worse trajectory than it did during the 20th century."

But whatever direction the continent ventured down from a different looking 1914, Miller Melamed is keen to de mythologise the significance of the shots fired by Princip that Sunday morning.

Indeed, distancing the killing from the outbreak of war is a key tenet of his new book, *Misfire: The Sarajevo Assassination and the Winding Road to World War I* (Oxford University Press, 2022). For him, Princip's actions weren't the direct cause, and the bullet wasn't actually "the shot heard around the world".

"The assassination did not trigger a world war," he vigorously contends. "Most people read the news just as they had news of the (far too) numerous and tragic political murders of the era shrugged, and quickly forgot about it. Predictions of a forthcoming European conflict directly after the assassination were so rare as to be rendered irrelevant. Even political leaders dismissed it, as seen in the now infamous quote by the British permanent under secretary for foreign affairs, Sir Arthur Nicholson, to his ambassador in St Petersburg: 'The tragedy which has just taken place in Sarajevo will not, I trust, lead to further complications.'"

## DIPLOMATIC FAILINGS

Sarajevo assassination or not, World War I was far from unavoidable. Miller Melamed cites the line from esteemed historian AJP Taylor: "No war is inevitable until it breaks out." And there was certainly no strong wind fanning this spark that supposedly ignited the tinderbox of European politics. Indeed, there were far graver predicaments such the Moroccan crises of 1905 and

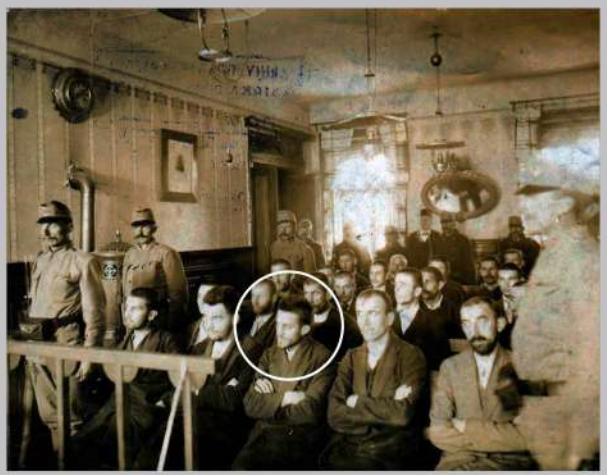
### DID YOU KNOW?

**BUNGLED BOMBING**

Gavrilo Princip was the second man to attempt the assassination that day. An accomplice had thrown a hand grenade at the archduke's car, but it bounced off and exploded under the vehicle coming up behind, injuring those inside.

## IN CONTEXT

On a summer's morning in Sarajevo in June 1914, a Bosnian Serb student called Gavrilo Princip shot dead Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, and his wife Sophie. A member of Young Bosnia, a group dedicated to freeing their homeland from Austrian occupation, Princip had planned the attack with a handful of accomplices. The assassination provoked the July Crisis, a series of overlapping escalations by various European countries and alliances that eventually led to the outbreak of World War I. Ever since, the assassination has been widely regarded as the opening shots of the war, even though hostilities didn't commence until exactly a month after the archduke's demise.



Gavrilo Princip (*circled*) with fellow Young Bosnia members during their trial for the assassination in October 1914. Princip died in prison four years later

GETTY IMAGES X3

ABOVE LEFT: **A famous photo long thought to depict Princip's arrest. In fact, the man being apprehended was a Bosnian sympathiser to the assassination**

TOP: **An artist's impression of the killing, printed on the front page of an Italian newspaper shortly after the event**

**"THE NOTION THAT 'FATE' BROUGHT THE ARCHDUKE'S CAR TO A STOP ON THAT STREET IN SARAJEVO IS TOTAL POPPYCOCK"**

1911, and the Bosnian annexation crisis of 1908 and they had been settled peacefully, says Miller Melamed.

"What the political murder did trigger was a diplomatic crisis that was not resolved diplomatically, and the main culprit here was the Austro Hungarian empire. They had seen just enough evidence of Serbian complicity in the assassination conspiracy of its heir to feel compelled to react, but it didn't have a smoking gun pointed at the Serbian government," he says. "And it would have been ludicrous for the Serbian government to risk war with a European great power 10 times its size and population by organising a plot to murder the heir to the throne of the Austro Hungarian empire."

Again, the gunshots didn't start the war and the bitter and unstable aftermath of the assassination could have been resolved. It was Austro Hungary's chosen interpretation of Princip's actions that led to such enormous loss of life.

"The assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand has been overplayed and mythologised in the century that followed. Common expressions, such as referring to 'the first shots of World War I' when there was no world war until a month later are problematic metaphors. They manipulate us into making a direct connection between the assassination and Armageddon," says Miller Melamed. "The ultimate example of mythologisation is the notion that something called 'fate' brought the archduke's car to a stop on that street in Sarajevo, which just so happened to be directly in front of the assassin as he was in the midst of eating a sandwich. This is total poppycock.

"It is comforting to think of World War I as 'inevitable'," concludes Miller Melamed, "because the alternative the reality is just too hard to assimilate. That is, that the war was brought about by 'rational' political leaders in 'civilised' Europe, not a Bosnian peasant's two randomly aimed pistol shots."

**LISTEN**

BBC RADIO 4 Margaret MacMillan charts the road to WWI, starting with Gavrilo Princip's assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, in the six-part series *1914: Day by Day*: *bbc.co.uk/programmes/b03t8m6h*

**NEXT MONTH**

**What if... the Great Fire of London had never happened?**

PART OF THE BBC Science Focus MAGAZINE COLLECTION

# SPACE
## THE FINAL FRONTIERS

### The missions that will unravel the mysteries of the Universe

BBC
Science Focus
MAGAZINE
COLLECTION
SPACE
THE FINAL FRONTIERS
The missions that will unravel the mysteries of the Universe
Voyage to Venus, our fiery neighbour
The hunt for the oldest galaxies in the Universe
Why scientists want to harvest space rocks
A new race to the Moon has begun
What will New Horizons discover beyond Pluto?
The next generation of exoplanet hunters
The rover that will search for life on the Red Planet
Secrets of the supermassive black hole
Planet 9: how we'll find it

This *BBC Science Focus* special edition reveals the exciting space missions that will help reveal more about the cosmos.

IN THIS ISSUE...

- **A new race to the Moon** has begun
- Why we need to **return to Venus**
- How we'll harvest **space rocks**
- **New Horizons:** Pluto and beyond
- The hunt for **Planet Nine**
- The **oldest galaxies** in the Universe

**PLUS – subscribers to *BBC History Revealed* receive FREE UK postage on this special edition**

**ONLY £9.99 INC. FREE UK POSTAGE***

The missions that will find out why Venus is so hellishly hot and toxic.

The powerful telescopes that peer into the depths of the Universe.

What will the photograph of a supermassive black hole teach us?

**Order online**
**www.buysubscriptions.com/frontiers**

**Or call** 03330 162 138†
**and quote** Space The Final Frontiers Print 1

† UK calls will cost the same as other standard fixed line numbers (starting 01 or 02) and are included as part of any inclusive or free minutes allowances (if offered by your phone tariff). Outside of free call packages call charges from mobile phones will cost between 3p and 55p per minute. Lines are open Mon to Fri 8am–6pm and Sat 9am–1pm. * Subscribers to *BBC History Revealed* receive FREE UK POSTAGE on this special edition. Prices including postage are: £11.49 for all non-subscribers, £12.99 for Europe and £13.49 for the Rest of World. All orders subject to availability. Please allow up to 21 days for delivery.

**20,000**

The approximate number of readers who cancelled their subscriptions to *The Strand* after Arthur Conan Doyle killed off Sherlock Holmes, the star of its serials, in 1893. The magazine nearly went bust.

MONUMENTAL ACHIEVEMENT
The remains of a conical tower at Great Zimbabwe (*main*), along with an aerial view showing a structure known as the Great Enclosure (*below right*). The ruined city dates back to the 11th century

# What happened to Great Zimbabwe?

**SHORT ANSWER** The historic African city is honoured in the name and flag of a country. Take that, Europeans

**LONG ANSWER** A once magnificent city, the sprawling ruins of Great Zimbabwe serve as an important monument to the people of Zimbabwe today. Not only did the site give the modern country its name, but Zimbabwe's national flag bears a bird based on the historic soapstone carvings found there. It is also a testament to the architectural skills of the culture who built it something that the Europeans tried to take away.

It is thought that Great Zimbabwe was constructed around the 11th century by one of the Bantu peoples, possibly the Shona; spread over 700 hectares, it was large enough for 18,000 people and a palace for the local monarch. The city prospered as a trading post for several hundred years, primarily with gold, but eventually fell into decline around 1450. This may have been the result of a drop in trade, overcrowding, crop failures or famine.

When European explorers found Great Zimbabwe, they could not accept that black Africans were capable of such an architectural feat, and theories abounded that it must have been a lost city linked to King Solomon of Israel or the Queen of Sheba, or that the Phoenicians, Greeks, Persians or Chinese had actually built it. So keen were they to promote this theory, that archaeological evidence was even suppressed to back up the delusion.

GETTY IMAGES X2

COBRA MEETING
Brazil's General Euclides Zenóbio da Costa briefs members of the 'Smoking Snakes' in Tuscany, 1944

# Who were the Smoking Snakes?

**SHORT ANSWER** 'Snakes might smoke' is a much more intriguing expression than 'pigs might fly'

**LONG ANSWER** During World War II, Brazil was the only independent country in South America to fight with the Allies: its navy and air force protected shipping in the Atlantic, while 25,900 men of the Brazilian Expeditionary Force (FEB) took part in the liberation of Italy.

In fact, from the battle of Monte Castello in late 1944, the FEB were involved in several important victories, all while sporting the insignia of a curled green snake with a pipe in its mouth a reference to the force's nickname of the *Cobras Fumantes*, or the 'Smoking Snakes'. But where did it come from?

The moniker had its origins in a phrase said in Brazil before the country had committed to helping the Allied effort, which can be translated as 'It is more likely for a snake to smoke a pipe than for the FEB to go to the front and fight'. So when they *did* go to the front, the men took it as a badge of honour.

**96**
The official number of men killed during the construction of the Hoover Dam, although the real number is likely higher since the authorities didn't count those who died from their injuries at a later date.

# Why are they called the Spanish Steps?

**SHORT ANSWER** With the Spanish Embassy in close proximity, it isn't much of a climb to get the answer

**LONG ANSWER** They are located in Rome; were paid for with money from a French diplomat; were designed and built by Italian architects; and feature an Egyptian obelisk at the top. So how did the so called 'Spanish Steps' get their name? The answer is simple: by the time the steps were constructed, in the 1720s, the Spanish Embassy to the Holy See was located on the public square that lay at the bottom of the steps, which was appropriately named the *Piazza di Spagna* (Square of Spain).

Officially known as the *Scalinata di Trinità dei Monti*, it is really only in English that the steps are referred to as Spanish perhaps a sign that the name was popularised by the English Romantics who flocked to Rome in the 19th century, such as Keats and Shelley.

HOLY ASCENSION
The Spanish Steps lead up to the church of the Santissima Trinità dei Monti, which gives the steps their Italian name

ROD HULL OR HIGH WATER
Despite the brave efforts of Aussie soldiers, the emus were victorious in the Great War of 1932

# What was the Emu War?

**SHORT ANSWER** An extreme form of animal control, but the Australian army underestimated its enemy

**LONG ANSWER** In 1932, the Australian military went to war against an enemy unlike anything they had faced before: an army of emus. The flightless birds averaging six feet in height and capable of running 30 miles per hour were a pest to the wheat farmers of Western Australia as they broke fences and ruined crops. When a herd of around 20,000 emus descended on the Campion and Walgoolan regions, Minister of Defence Sir George Pearce got involved and dispatched heavy weaponry as an extreme form of animal control.

This was hardly an army: more like three soldiers with two Lewis light machine guns and 10,000 rounds of ammunition. Military operations got underway in November and almost immediately failed since the emus just scattered whenever the shooting started. Even if hit, they wouldn't go down easily. By December, the soldiers were forced to admit defeat in the Great Emu War amid much ridicule in the press.

GETTY IMAGES X3, ALAMY X3

GREAT IN BREAD
Montagu (*right*) was not the first person to enjoy the popular lunchtime staple

# Did the Earl of Sandwich invent the sandwich?

**SHORT ANSWER** Take two slices of bread, put a fun legend about card-playing in between, and there you have your apocryphal creation

**LONG ANSWER** Legend goes that, in 1762, inveterate gambler John Montagu, 4th Earl of Sandwich, was at the card table for 24 hours straight and, not wishing to interrupt his marathon session, asked his servant for two slices of bread with a slice of beef in between. And so, the first sandwich was made.

In truth, the story is most likely apocryphal and, besides, there are contradicting details across other versions, including that it was the servant or cook who actually concocted the bread and meat combo, and that Montagu was not playing cards at all, but working at his desk.

The convenient and easy to make meal certainly pre dated the Earl of Sandwich (the first century BC Jewish leader Hillel the Elder is remembered for putting herbs and lamb in between flatbread for a Passover Seder), but it is his name that caught on. It got mentions in the diary of esteemed historian Edward Gibbon and a 1772 travel book by French writer Pierre Jean Grosley.

On the subject of names, the 1st Earl, Edward Montagu, selected the Kent town of Sandwich for his title as that was the main English port at the time. Had he chosen differently, we may well be eating a ham and cheese Portsmouth.

## DID YOU KNOW?

**TAX PROPOSAL**
In the early 1900s, Argentina imposed a tax on unmarried men. Those who could prove they had proposed and been turned down were exempt, which led some women to offer the service to bachelors in exchange for a small fee.

**MONSIEUR SMITH**
Louis Philippe I, the last King of France (1830 48), lived out his life in exile in Britain as the Comte de Neuilly. When escaping Paris, however, he had been disguised simply as 'Mr Smith'.

**LOOKING GREEN**
Scheele's green was a vividly bright pigment that became hugely popular in Victorian paints and wallpaper. But the artificial colourant contained dangerous levels of arsenic and caused severe illnesses.

**OUT OF THE BOX**
Earl Tupper, the US businessman who invented Tupperware, kept journals filled with ideas for numerous other creations, including a non drip ice cream cone and a boat designed to be propelled by a tethered (and presumably very large) fish.

# Why was he called Ivar the Boneless?

**SHORT ANSWER** It may have been a rather limp joke

**LONG ANSWER** Now, there are plenty of Vikings with hard to fathom nicknames Harald Bluetooth, Ragnar Shaggy Breeches and Billy goat Bjorn but we can only guess why Ivar Ragnarsson was 'the Boneless'. The sagas relate the story that his mother Kraka warned her husband, Shaggy Breeches himself, not to be impatient on their wedding night and wait three days. He did not, and she was cursed with a child with no bones.

It is possible the chieftain suffered from brittle bone disease. This would have stopped him from walking, which fits with the stories of him being carried on a shield but doesn't match the accounts of him as a mighty warrior. So could the name have had another meaning? It might have been a reference to Ivar's impotence: a different kind of boneless, if you will.

**WAVES OF ATTACKERS**
Ivar the Boneless and his brothers led an invasion of Britain in AD 865

# Were the Dropa Stones real?

**SHORT ANSWER** This belongs in the fantasy section, not history

**LONG ANSWER** During an archaeological expedition in 1938, a collection of 716 stone discs was discovered in a mountain cave in China. Each disc was about a foot in diameter with a hole in the middle, like a vinyl record, and they were covered in tiny hieroglyphics. It was claimed the discs were 12,000 years old and the glyphs told of alien visitors, called the 'Dropa'

how they were dated or translated is anyone's guess. Then they disappeared. In fact, there is no concrete evidence that they actually existed in the first place. So the real question is: how could anyone think the Dropa Stones were real?

**A GIRL'S BEST FRIEND**
It wasn't until after World War II that it became popular for men to purchase diamond-encrusted rings for their brides-to-be

# How long have engagement rings had diamonds?

**SHORT ANSWER** In the 1940s, a diamond business had a sparkling idea for a marketing campaign

**LONG ANSWER** The earliest documented use of a diamond engagement ring was in 1477, when Maximilian of the Habsburgs future Archduke of Austria and Holy Roman Emperor presented one to his betrothed, Mary of Burgundy. Obviously, this set something of a trend in the imperial court. While diamond rings have been around since, they generally remained the preserve of the wealthy.

That changed in 1947 when diamond business De Beers launched a canny advertising campaign. To get sales up after the Great Depression and World War II, they introduced the slogan, "A diamond is forever", and flooded the market with the message that only diamonds were acceptable for engagement rings, preferably De Beers diamonds.

To put it mildly, it worked. Their sales in the US went from a million to a billion dollar industry, and the proportion of diamond studded engagement rings went from 10 per cent in the 1930s to 80 per cent by the 21st century.

**51**
The number of years that the Profane Swearing Act – from 1695 to 1746 – made swearing and cursing a fineable offence in England.

# Why did the Burlington Liars' Club begin?

**SHORT ANSWER** It must have been a real slow news day in Burlington in 1930

**LONG ANSWER** Since 1930, a peculiar organisation in Burlington, Wisconsin, has appointed one person every year as World Champion Liar for telling the best, most creative fib. Honestly, no lie. Appropriately enough, the Burlington Liars' Club arose from a lie: it began when local news reporters Mannel Hahn and Otis Hulett both wrote fake stories about the town's notable residents including lawyers, police and firemen getting together on New Year's Day to share their most audacious, hard to swallow tales.

It was just for fun, but the newspapers ran with it and introduced the idea that a winner was chosen for telling the best lie (an old sea captain who claimed he once saw a whale three miles long). Readers liked the sound of the fictional contest so much that a liars' club was launched for real and has been going ever since.

**SPREADING FAKE NEWS** Journalist Otis Hulett served as president of the Burlington Liars' Club for half a century

GETTY IMAGES X4, ALAMY X3

**TERRIFYING PERFORMANCE** Forest Whitaker (*above, centre*) won an Oscar for his portrayal of Idi Amin (*right*) in the 2006 film *The Last King of Scotland*

# Why did Idi Amin call himself the 'king of Scotland'?

**SHORT ANSWER** The deranged dictator believed Uganda and Scotland had something in common: anti-Englishness

**LONG ANSWER** For his barbarous regime of torture, execution and sadism from 1971 to 1979, Idi Amin became known as the 'Butcher of Uganda'. While that wasn't a nickname of his choosing, he may not have minded it and he did enjoy awarding himself titles.

Just look at his official one: "His Excellency, President for Life, Field Marshal Al Hadji Doctor Idi Amin Dada, VC, DSO, MC, CBE, Lord of All the Beasts of the Earth and Fishes of the Seas and Conqueror of the British Empire in Africa in General and Uganda in Particular".

Perhaps his most bizarre self given honour, though, was 'king of Scotland'; a result, he claimed, of his affinity with the Scots as they, too, opposed colonial oppression from the English. Amin bewildered everyone with his fondness for kilts and bagpipes, and he even discussed raising an army for Scottish independence.

He also named four of his 43 known children Campbell, Mackintosh, McKenzie and McLaren.

**NOT A LOTTA DOUGH**
Ruth Graves Wakefield (*below*) sold the rights to her recipe for just $1, although Nestlé did give her free chocolate for life

# Who first created chocolate chip cookies?

**SHORT ANSWER** Dessert maestro Ruth Wakefield... but not by accident

**LONG ANSWER** If the most repeated creation story for the chocolate chip cookie is to be believed, then the whole thing was an accident. One day, while making a type of cookie with melted chocolate mixed into the dough, American chef Ruth Graves Wakefield realised that she didn't have the right kind of baking chocolate and so had to use some that wouldn't melt fully. She got away with the mistake, since the new type of cookie with chocolately chunks inside went down a treat.

Unfortunately, that was just not how the cookie crumbled. Wakefield was something of a local celebrity in Whitman, Massachusetts, for the creative desserts she dished up at the Toll House Inn that she operated with her husband Kenneth. And she was a perfectionist. Her greatest creation was never going to be an accident: she had been developing a new recipe and knew exactly what she was doing to get her new Toll House Chocolate Crunch Cookies just right.

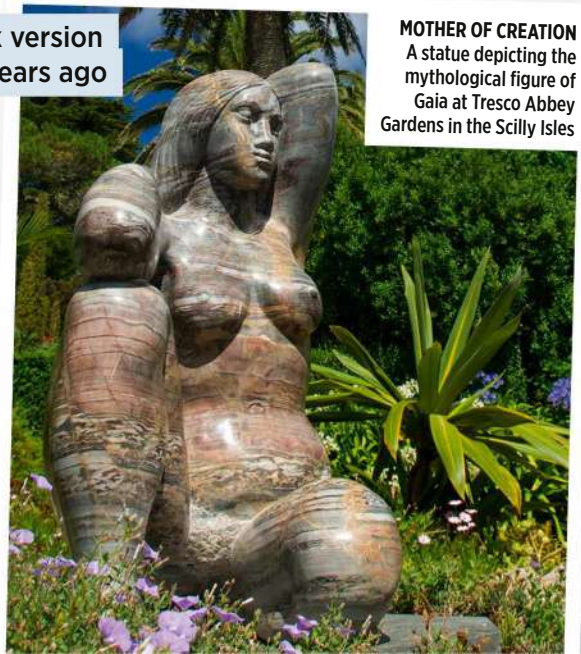
They appeared in her 1938 cookbook, *Tried and True*, before she sold the rights to the recipe to Nestlé, supposedly for just $1. Wakefield allegedly never saw that money, although Nestlé did ensure that she got free chocolate for life.

# How old is Mother Nature?

**SHORT ANSWER** The ancient Greek version first appeared more than 3,000 years ago

**LONG ANSWER** The image of a life giving, nurturing mother is such a fitting personification of nature that it has been seen in most ancient civilisations around the world, from Pachamama in the Andean cultures to the Spider Grandmother figure of Native American peoples.

The origins of Mother Nature, however, can be traced back to ancient Greece, with the earliest known reference dating from the second millennium BC. The Greeks called her Gaia, and it was believed that she came before all other gods and gave birth to all things in nature. Among her sons were the sky and the sea.



**MOTHER OF CREATION**
A statue depicting the mythological figure of Gaia at Tresco Abbey Gardens in the Scilly Isles

# What was the Habsburg jaw?

**SHORT ANSWER** Years of inbreeding left the dynasty with jutting jawlines

**LONG ANSWER** For centuries, the Habsburgs were one of the most prominent royal dynasties in Europe. But there was something else that was prominent about them: their jawline. Many members had the same physical trait of a protruding bottom jaw that could be so pronounced that even the most flattering portrait artists of the day couldn't hide them.

The 'Habsburg jaw' was the biological result of generations of inbreeding. In a bid to keep power within the family, the Habsburgs really kept everything within the family. They married off cousins and uncles to nieces to keep the line pure. It worked, but drained the gene pool dry.

Among the worst sufferers was Charles II, the last Spanish Habsburg king (1665 1700). On top of his varied collection of conditions and disorders, his Habsburg jaw was so bad that his rows of teeth did not meet, and he was unable to chew his food.

**CHIN DYNASTY**
Generations of inbreeding meant King Charles II of Spain was unable to eat or speak properly

## SEND US YOUR QUESTIONS

facebook.com/HistoryExtra
twitter.com/HistoryExtra
@HistoryExtra

## MORE Q&A ONLINE

Visit ***historyextra.com*** for more astounding history mysteries.

# Try 3 issues for £5*

Subscribe to *BBC History Magazine* and explore the historical background to the world of today

**Subscribe to Britain's bestselling history magazine**

GETTY IMAGES

**Your special introductory offer:**

- Receive your first **3 issues for only £5**
- **Risk free trial offer** you may cancel your subscription at any time.
- **Free UK delivery** direct to your door, at no extra charge!
- **Never miss an issue** of Britain's best-selling history magazine

* 3 issues for £5 is available for UK residents paying by Direct Debit only. After your first 3 issues, your subscription will continue at £24.99 every 6 issues, saving 30% off the shop price. If you cancel your subscription within 2 weeks of receiving your 2nd issue, you will pay no more than £5. Your subscription will start with the next available issue. Offer ends 31 December 2022.

+ UK calls will cost the same as other standard fixed line numbers (starting 01 or 02) and are included as part of any inclusive or free minutes allowances if offered by your phone tariff. Outside of free call packages calls charges from mobile phones will cost between 3p and 55p per minute. Lines are open 9am 5pm weekdays. Overseas readers call +44 1604 973 723

## EASY WAYS TO ORDER

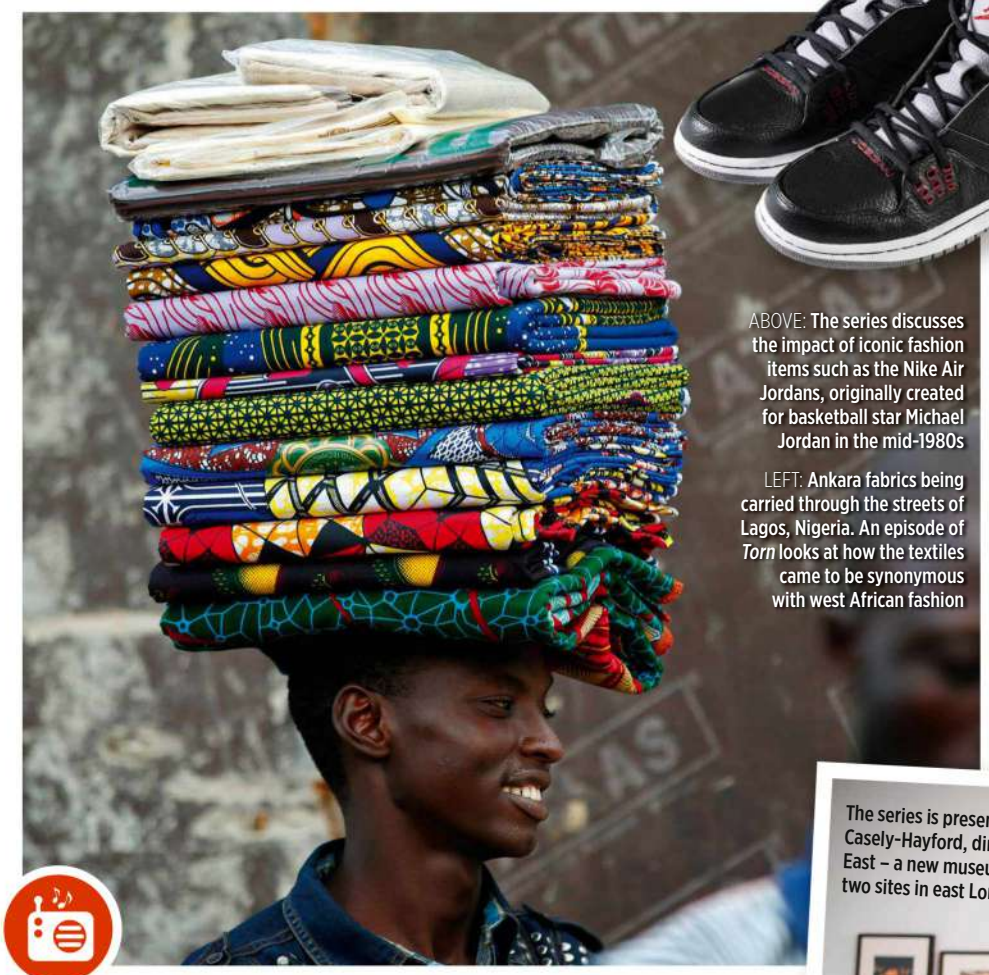
**ORDER ONLINE**

**www.buysubscriptions.com/HTHA22**

**BY PHONE**

**03330 162 115+**

PLEASE QUOTE HTHA22



ABOVE: The series discusses the impact of iconic fashion items such as the Nike Air Jordans, originally created for basketball star Michael Jordan in the mid-1980s

LEFT: Ankara fabrics being carried through the streets of Lagos, Nigeria. An episode of *Torn* looks at how the textiles came to be synonymous with west African fashion

Another instalment of the radio series explores the cultural impact of the miniskirt

The series is presented by Dr Gus Casely-Hayford, director of V&A East – a new museum that will span two sites in east London

# The language of fashion

## Torn: A Narrative History of Fashion

BBC Radio 4, Monday 22 August

The idea that clothes can be ephemeral is intrinsic to fashion. A shirt or dress that's all the rage this year can look horribly dated just a few months later. No wonder we don't always take fashion seriously. This, suggests Dr Gus Casely Hayford, cultural historian and director of V&A East, is a mistake.

"Not many of us are lucky enough to work within the arts, and have close time and exposure to original pieces," he tells *BBC History Revealed*, "but fashion is one of the areas in which we can all be creative, where we can all have really close contact with gorgeous things and express ourselves."

That's true not just of countries where people take choice for granted. "There are parts of the world where you can travel and it feels like everyone wears the same sorts of things," adds Casely Hayford, "yet people are still making incredible choices, just within much tighter margins."

In short, the clothes we wear represent an intersection of personal style, identity, economics and politics, something we all instinctively understand. So much so that as we move through the world, we engage in a kind of unspoken conversation around "sartorial decision making" without even really realising we're doing it.

How can we better understand this process? Casely Hayford's new BBC Radio 4 series *Torn* takes the approach of focusing on different items of clothing, those that have endured and become "iconic", and tracing their histories, and how they can mean different things in different places and at different times. How did brightly coloured and patterned Ankara shirts, for example, become synonymous with west Africa? How has the development of rayon influenced the design of garments?

By exploring these kinds of questions, hopes Casely Hayford, we might better understand the "silent discourse" of fashion: "Let's try to deconstruct and analyse that, and think about the decisions we're making. Think about the stories that underpin those decisions and think about where some of that might take us in the future."

GETTY IMAGES X2, ALAMY X2

US troops undergoing training in the Solomon Islands, c1944. A new series examines the Pacific War in vivid and compelling detail

## Total war

**WWII in the Pacific / PBS America, Tuesday 2 – Thursday 4 August**

On 7 June 1941, Japan's imperial leadership took a huge gamble. Seeking to expand Japan's Asian territories, it took a pre emptive strike against the United States by bombing the naval base at Pearl Harbor. What followed was a war fought across a vast geographic area, and where aircraft carriers became a key weapon by providing mobile air strips.

But this was also a war of attrition, in which Japanese forces refused to cede ground as the tide of war changed. One result of this was, as this three part series explores, that when it came to the Pacific War endgame, the US used its newly developed nuclear weapons against the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki because the alternative taking mainland Japan through invasion was too terrible to contemplate.

Lord Mountbatten (*centre*) discusses Partition with the future governor-general of Pakistan, Muhammad Ali Jinnah (*right*), and the future Indian prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru (*far left*)

# Division and displacement

**Partition in Colour** / Channel 4, Sunday 7 August

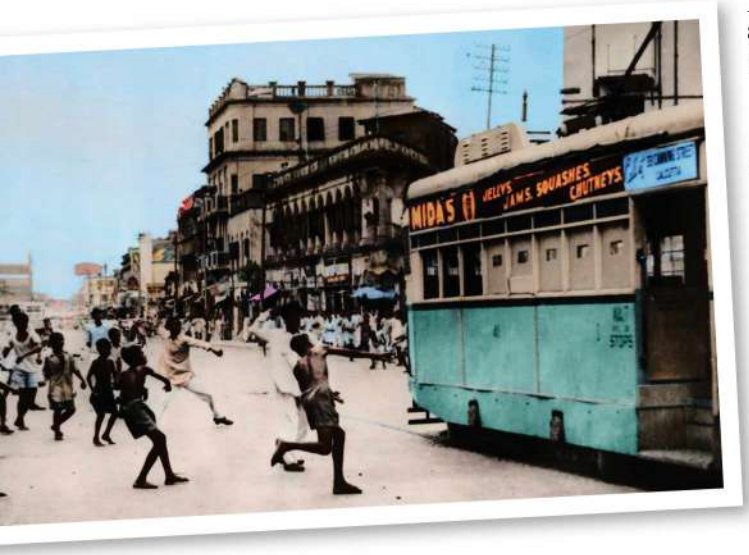
There are historical events that, after long years when they have been little discussed, suddenly seem to be at the centre of popular culture. The Partition of British India, which in 1947 divided the country into two independent dominions, India and Pakistan, is one such event.

The 70th anniversary of Partition, in 2017, was important here in that it encouraged many who lived through the turmoil to speak anew or even for the first time about what they experienced. As well as featuring in numerous documentaries and becoming central to a wider reappraisal of the colonial era on the subcontinent, Partition has subsequently turned up in popular dramas too, such as *Doctor Who* and, most recently, *Ms Marvel*.

The 75th anniversary brings new contributions to this conversation, notably *Partition in Colour*, a two part series that uses newly colourised archive footage to tell the story of what happened in the run up to Partition from three different perspectives: the British, Indian nationalists and the Muslim community.

One subject the series touches upon is the relationship between Jawaharlal Nehru, the country's first prime minister, and Edwina Mountbatten, wife of Louis Mountbatten, India's last viceroy. Did their close bond, widely rumoured to have been more than platonic, have an impact on what ultimately happened?

Listen out too for *Inheritors of Partition* (BBC Radio 4, Monday 8 August), a follow-up to BBC journalist Kavita Puri's *Partition Voices* (2017). The show follows some of the British descendants of those who lived through India's schism, which led to terrible violence and to millions becoming refugees, as they trace how events in 1947 affected their subsequent family histories.




Men and boys throw stones at a tram in Calcutta, April 1947. The impact of Partition later that year is explored in Channel 4's new documentary series, which features newly colourised archive footage

An elderly TS Eliot inspects manuscripts at his desk. A new film explores the poet's 1922 masterpiece, *The Waste Land*

# Ancient stories vividly retold

## Natalie Haynes Stands Up for the Classics / BBC Radio 4, Sunday 14 August

The idea that stories of the classical world might be fascinating, even fun, sounds like the kind of thing a teacher would say in a bid to persuade reluctant pupils to study harder. But there's more than a grain of truth in this proposition, as Natalie Haynes has been proving for a number of years now.

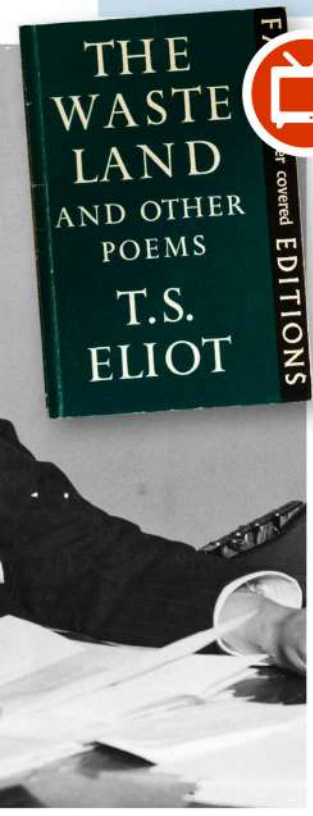
It helps that Haynes used to be a comedian, someone adept at spinning yarns in front of live audiences. So much so that one of the shows in the eighth series of *Natalie Haynes Stands Up for the Classics* features her retelling the story of Homer's epic poem the *Odyssey* in just 28 minutes. Odysseus himself, it's worth noting, took a decade to get home following the Trojan War.

Elsewhere in the series, Haynes considers the lives of women in Sparta, a programme that focuses in part on Queen Gorgo, wife of King Leonidas of the last stand battle of Thermopylae (480 BC) fame. Famously, Sparta was a highly militarised society in which boys, at least those who weren't slaves, were expected to grow up to be soldiers. As for Sparta's women, they lived comparatively free lives by the standards of ancient Greece and may even have been listened to sometimes by their hyper macho menfolk.

The other shows deal with Pompeii, buried by the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 AD, and the Roman poet Lucretius (c99 c55 BC). Experts such as archaeologist and Pompeii authority Dr Sophie Hay and the classicist Professor Edith Hall are on hand to help Haynes bring the past alive.

ABOVE: **A painting depicting the siege of Troy. Homer's *Odyssey*, the story of a hero's return from the Trojan War, is retold by Natalie Haynes (*inset*) in her latest radio series**

LEFT: **Another episode focuses on the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in AD 79, which buried the city of Pompeii and its residents**




# Love triangle

## TS Eliot: Into The Waste Land

BBC Two, August (TBC)

The modernist poet TS Eliot (1888 1965) discouraged interpretations of his work that rested on his own biography. So much so that his theory of impersonality held that a poet's private life was irrelevant to understanding their work.

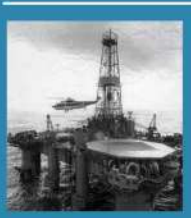
But to judge by a cache of more than 1,000 of Eliot's private letters, unsealed at Princeton University in January 2020, 60 years after they were first deposited there, this is an idea we should treat with some suspicion. Written to his confidante and muse, Emily Hale, they reveal his enduring affection for her and his troubled relationship with his first wife, Vivien.

In a new film marking the centenary year of Eliot's *The Waste Land*, director Susanna White charts how this emotional triangle impacted on the poem's creation. As well as featuring contributions from actor Fiona Shaw, composer Max Richter and poets Hannah Sullivan and Daljit Nagra, the documentary also includes readings from Simon Russell Beale and, from the archives, Eliot himself.

On the subject of literary anniversaries, it's also the centenary year of *Ulysses*, an occasion that is celebrated in *Arena: James Joyce's Ulysses* (BBC Two, Friday 26 August). Novelists paying tribute to another important modernist work a book that pioneered stream of consciousness storytelling include Salman Rushdie, Colm Tóibín, Anne Enright, Howard Jacobson and Eimear McBride.

# Warning signs ignored

## Big Oil v the World / Now available to stream on BBC iPlayer



As long ago as the 1970s, scientists working in the fossil fuel industry knew far more about global heating than it revealed to the public. Worse than this, as this three part series in the *This World* strand explores, the oil industry campaigned to sow doubt about the very idea of manmade climate change.

This BBC Two series draws on thousands of newly discovered documents and seeks to explain how we got to today: a time when the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change is issuing new warnings about global temperatures and yet fuel costs are soaring.

GETTY IMAGES X8, ALAMY X1

MAIN: **Matt Houston's full torso design, inspired by traditional sailor tattoos, is one of the exhibition's many highlights**

BELOW: **A plaque by Jade Clark forms part of the exhibition's new Reclaiming the Narrative display, celebrating black and POC artists**

**A box of tools that belonged to Jessie Knight – Britain's first major female tattoo artist**

**Charissa Gregson adds the finishing touches to her commission for the exhibition, *Starry Crown***

EXHIBITION

# Tattoo: British Tattoo Art Revealed

**PAID ENTRY** National Maritime Museum Cornwall, Falmouth, until 16 April 2023, *nmmc.co.uk*

Today, the popularity of tattoos is on the rise and the artform is firmly part of the mainstream. But while getting inked wasn't so widely accepted by past generations, there are still a lot of preconceptions and myths about historical tattooing and the people who braved going under the needle. These are challenged, and the colourful history of tattooing in Britain explored, in an exhibition returning to National Maritime Museum Cornwall.

Featuring a stunning selection of artworks, photographs and historic artefacts, the display brings together highlights from the hugely successful *Tattoo* exhibition, which has spent the past few years touring nationwide, along with 14 new commissions created by black and POC artists.

Matt Houston's eye-catching designs honouring the sailor tattoo are also featured once again, as is a unique 21st century take on traditional Tahitian tattoos by Tihoti Faara Barff. Meanwhile, an installation entitled *100 Hands* showcases the talents of 100 British artists making their mark today. Curated by Alice Snape of *Things & Ink* magazine, each design has been tattooed on a silicone arm, which makes for a striking, colourful sight when all 100 are displayed together on a wall.

Whether you're inked head to toe or tattoo free, this exhibition is sure to capture your imagination. And, just maybe, might even inspire you to take a trip to the tattoo parlour yourself.

**Each silicone hand in the *100 Hands* installation bears a unique and stunning tattoo design**

IAN KINGSNORTH X2, PAUL ABBITT X2, IWM X1, REBELLION X1, AWOL ERIZKU/COURTESY BEN BROWN FINE ARTS X1, SAINSBURY CENTRE COLLECTION X1, BRITISH LIBRARY BOARD X1, GETTY X1, NATIONAL ARCHIVES X1

Present meets past: a still from video game *Sniper Elite 5* and, above, a World War I facial prosthetic

EXHIBITION

# War Games

**FREE ENTRY** IWM London, opens 30 September, *iwm.org.uk*

From gritty first person shooters to campaign simulators, war based video games can put players straight onto the battlefield, with each new major release striving to make the experience feel as realistic as possible. And now, a landmark exhibition at IWM London the first to consider the relationship between video games and conflict considers how the medium can interpret some of history's bloodiest battles.

Through 12 games, including industry heavyweight *Call of Duty: Modern Warfare* and the new *Sniper Elite 5*, along with immersive installations and a retro gaming zone, visitors are invited to reflect on the real life conflicts that have inspired the format. Meanwhile, accompanying physical artefacts such as facial prosthetics created for soldiers who sustained life changing injuries during World War I serve to highlight the very real consequences of war.

EVENT

## Gloriana: Perspectives on Elizabeth I

**PAID ENTRY** Southwark Cathedral, London, 24 September, *cathedral.southwark.anglican.org*

Kicking off this special, one day event in which five leading Tudor experts will share their insights into the life, reign and 'golden age' of Elizabeth I is bestselling author Alison Weir, who will give the audience a glimpse of what the queen was like away from the throne. Following that, Sarah Gristwood will look at Elizabeth's controversial relationship with Robert Dudley; Siobhan Clarke and Linda Collins will delve into the queen's image and 'Cult of Gloriana'; and Tracy Borman will talk about the other women in the queen's life. The day is then scheduled to end with a panel discussion featuring all five speakers.

Elizabeth I – depicted in her coronation robes (*above*) and on her great seal (*left*) – is the subject of a special day of talks

EXHIBITION

## Visions of Ancient Egypt

**PAID ENTRY** Sainsbury Centre, Norwich, opens 3 September, *sainsburycentre.ac.uk*

Even though the last pharaoh died thousands of years ago, we're still obsessed with ancient Egypt from the pyramids and sphinxes that tower over the heads of curious tourists, to the enigmatic hieroglyphs carved into the walls of grand temples. But why are we still so gripped by Egyptomania?

This exhibition seeks to answer exactly that, exploring how ancient Egypt has become embedded in our art and culture. With a wide ranging display of paintings, architecture, sculpture and more on show, visitors can see how Egypt's mighty empire has been endlessly reimagined from Shakespeare to the 21st century.

A 2018 representation of Nefertiti by Awol Erizku (*above*), and an 18th Dynasty stone relief (*left*)

EXHIBITION

# Lindisfarne Gospels

**PAID ENTRY** Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle, 17 September to 3 December, *laingartgallery.org.uk*

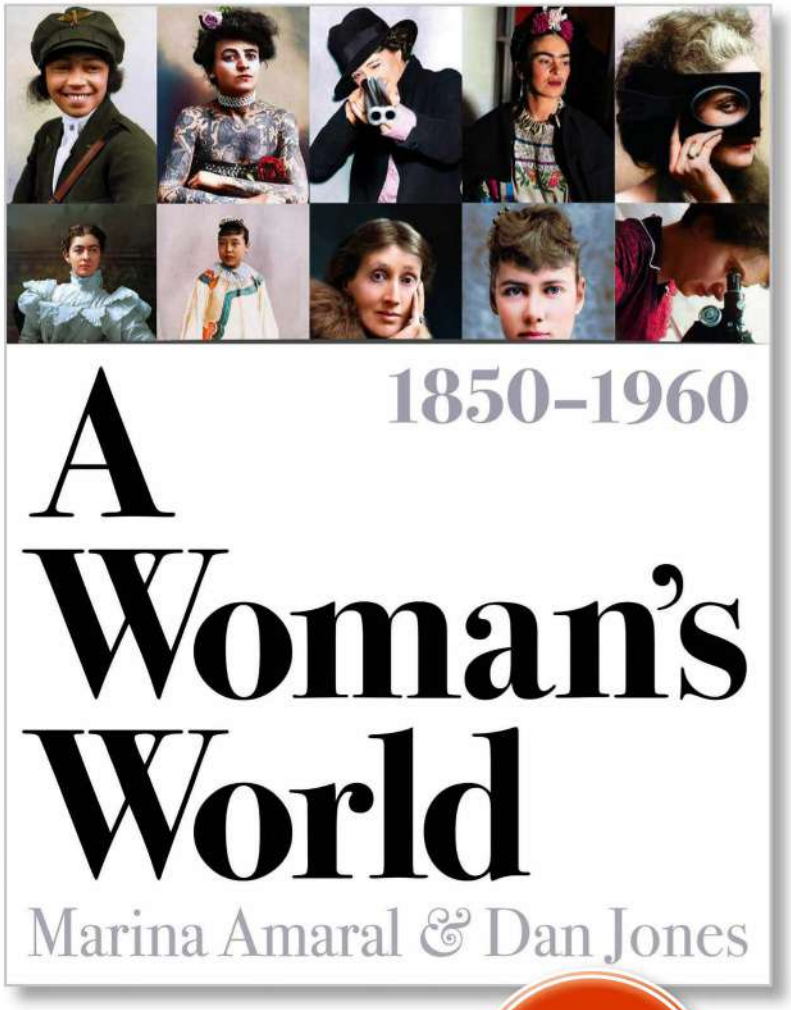
The Lindisfarne Gospels in its famous jewel-encrusted binding, added in 1852 after the original binding was lost

Painstakingly created, copied and decorated at Lindisfarne monastery, probably in the eighth century, the Lindisfarne Gospels is a masterpiece of early medieval England. Boasting stunning full-page illuminations, it tells the story of Jesus Christ's life and his most important teachings – and offers a fascinating window into religion during the Middle Ages.

Now, the manuscript has left its home at the British Library for a special exhibition in Newcastle, which will explore its place in the world today and its connection to Britain's identity.

# BOOKS & PODCASTS

THIS MONTH'S BEST HISTORICAL READS AND LISTENS




BOOK OF THE MONTH

## A Woman's World, 1850–1960

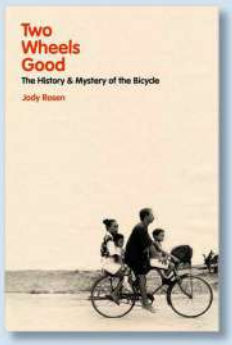
**By Marina Amaral and Dan Jones**
**Head of Zeus, £30, hardback, 432 pages**

When Marina Amaral and Dan Jones were working on 2018's bestselling *The Colour of Time*, the duo note in the foreword to this new book, they were struck by how few women featured in its pages. This new compilation of colourised photographs sets out to reframe the same era as that earlier collection 1850 to 1960 with a renewed focus on the stories and experiences of women. From science and sport to schooling and statecraft, the striking images offer a new window on to fascinating, inspiring lives.

## Two Wheels Good: The History and Mystery of the Bicycle

**By Jody Rosen**
**Bodley Head, £25, hardback, 416 pages**

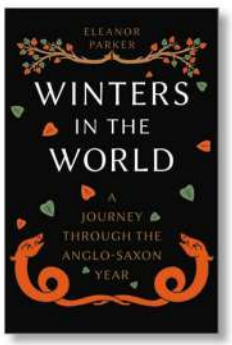
In a world of smartphones and self driving cars, what explains the continuing global popularity of the humble bicycle? That's one of the questions powering this book, which blends history, memoir and travel writing to assess the rise and rise of the bike and where it might be headed in the future. From its invention in the early 19th century to its association with World War I combat, women's social mobility, and the spread of empire, this is an enthralling overview of a quiet transport revolution.

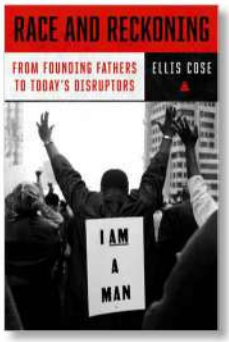



## Winters in the World: A Journey Through the Anglo-Saxon Year

**By Eleanor Parker**
**Reaktion Books, £14.99, hardback, 240 pages**

Both an accessible introduction to the Anglo Saxon age and an evocative celebration of its seasonal rhythms and links with nature, this book guides readers through the year as captured by the writers of the era. Those deep connections meant that the changing seasons had a huge impact on the ways in which people lived and worked, made sense of the world, celebrated times of plenty and withstood hardship and what's surprising is how many of those customs extended for many centuries to come.






## Race and Reckoning: From Founding Fathers to Today's Disruptors

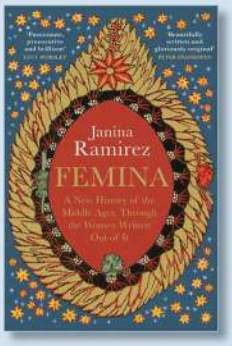
**By Ellis Cose**
**Amistad, £20, hardback, 256 pages**

Making sense of the United States' 21st century racial tensions through a series of historical turning points, this bold, opinionated book suggests that the narrative of 'American exceptionalism' has gone hand in hand with a more sinister trend of endemic discrimination and the exploitation of racial anxiety for political ends. The big picture narrative is studded with extensively researched, and often very moving, case studies spanning the Civil War era Reconstruction to the present day.

## Femina: A New History of the Middle Ages, Through the Women Written Out of It

**By Janina Ramirez**
**WH Allen, £22, hardback, 464 pages**

If you've ever caught one of Janina Ramirez's TV documentaries, you'll be familiar with her combination of deep knowledge of her subject and enormous, infectious enthusiasm. She brings both to this new look at the medieval era, which highlights the stories of women often omitted from the record. As well as charting their experiences and overlooked contributions, Ramirez also offers a masterful overview of the diverse array of sources that can help us understand more about their lives.



## Henrietta Maria: Conspirator, Warrior, Phoenix Queen

**By Leanda de Lisle**
**Chatto & Windus, £25, hardback, 496 pages**

Leanda de Lisle's 2018 book *White King* charted the often hidden depths of Charles I, who changed the monarchy forever and paid the ultimate price. Here, de Lisle turns her attention to his wife, Henrietta Maria, similarly shading with nuance a character who can sometimes be reduced to primary colour simplicity. Chronicling her early life in France and her advocacy for the role of women, it's a very different take from the more familiar caricature of a flighty, bigoted temptress.

# PODCAST WHAT TO LISTEN TO...

**Each month we bring you three of our favourite podcasts from the BBC and HistoryExtra**

## You're Dead to Me: series five

**bbc.in/3tqxqfX**

Greg Jenner's podcast series blending history with comedy continues in fine form, with recent instalments profiling such notable individuals as feared pirate Blackbeard and ancient Egyptian ruler Hatshepsut. That's typical of the diversity and range of the series but what remains constant is its mix of the funny and the informative.

## Everything You Wanted to Know About... Schools

**bit.ly/SchoolsPod111**

Relive the schooldays of generations gone by with this instalment of *HistoryExtra*'s 'Everything You Wanted to Know' series. Why do we start the school year in September? When was corporal punishment abolished? And how different was education for girls and boys? Susannah Wright has the answers to those questions, and many others besides.

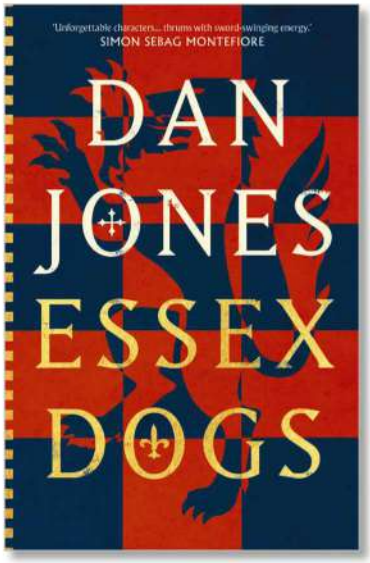
## Tutankhamun: Life, Death and Legacy

**bit.ly/TutPod111**

This *HistoryExtra* podcast series tells the story of 14th century BC pharaoh Tutankhamun, who remains one of the ancient world's most famous figures. From the achievements of his rule to the spectacular 1922 discovery of his tomb, this is essential listening for anyone fascinated by the power and majesty of ancient Egypt.

GETTY IMAGES X1

# HISTORICAL FICTION




## Essex Dogs

**By Dan Jones**
**Head of Zeus, £16.99, hardback, 464 pages**

It is July 1346, and the conflict that will come to be known as the Hundred Years' War has been raging for nearly a decade. Led by a battle scarred captain and calling themselves the 'Essex Dogs', 10 unruly archers and men at arms land on the beaches of Normandy, where they embark on a bloody campaign in which the rules of chivalry are seemingly abandoned. The war will change Europe forever, but Dan Jones' debut historical novel the first instalment of what promises to be an epic trilogy tells the stories of the ordinary fighting men just trying to stay alive.

## Excerpt

*King Edward III of England has launched an invasion across the Channel to press his claims to the French throne. Among the forces landing on the beaches of Normandy is a tight knit company known as the 'Essex Dogs', whose members are soon swept up in the chaos of war...*

More crossbow shot flew across them two bolts cracked into the side of the pinnace and another fizzed so close to Loveday's nose that he felt the air move. He tried to calm his breath. Remind himself he had been under bombardment before and lived.

In front of him, Tebbe, Romford and Thorp were trying to stand and nock arrows to shoot back. Loveday bellowed at them to stay low. Tebbe ducked down again, and the Scot leapt back, putting his giant hands on Romford and Thorp's shoulders and forcing them prone.

Still the Welshmen at the oars pulled and pulled, and then, at last, the boat rose high on a breaking wave and fell with a thump on to hard sand. The impact half winded Loveday, but he heard Pismire shouting from the bow, screaming at the Dogs to get out and drag the boat up the beach.

Then, as if lifted by the hand of the Lord, Loveday was up, grabbing his sword and heaving himself over the side of the pinnace, into the saltwater, losing his breath for a second time as the cold hit him. But he found his feet, and started bawling orders.

## Q&A
### Dan Jones

Dan Jones is an award-winning historian, broadcaster and journalist, and the author of several bestselling books on the medieval period, including *Powers and Thrones: A New History of the Middle Ages* (Head of Zeus, 2021). *Essex Dogs*, the first part of a planned trilogy, is his first work of fiction.

**What is it about the Hundred Years' War that inspired you to set a novel during the period?**
I know the Hundred Years' War reasonably well from my work on the Plantagenet dynasty. It's a famous period of conflict between England and France, and offers some tasty engagements for dramatisation. *Essex Dogs* is set during the Crécy campaign of 1346, when the Black Prince 'won his spurs' and a big set-piece battle at the end of a tough slog of an invasion produced a surprising result. These events struck me as good basic building blocks for an exciting novel. I also felt that, because the period had already been worked over by other novelists, there was a challenge to do it differently.

**What can readers expect from the trilogy?**
It is a view of medieval war from the ground up. *Essex Dogs* begins with a huge military landing on the Normandy beaches – it's D-Day, but in 1346 instead of 1944 – and we see the war through the eyes of what you might in a World War II book call the 'grunts': a platoon of 10 ordinary men from Essex and other parts of the British Isles, trying to muddle through the chaos of war.

Inevitably, they bump into the knights, lords and royals who are leading the campaign, and who will get the big write-ups from the chroniclers. Each chapter of the novel begins with a quote from one of these chroniclers – writers like Jean Froissart, who approved of war as a vehicle for chivalry and knightly prowess. Then the story that unfolds plays counterpoint. There are lots of in-jokes for people who know their history, but you don't need to get them to enjoy the book!

**How difficult was it making the leap into fiction?**
It was tricky at the beginning. Fiction uses a completely different bit of the brain (or my brain, anyway), to non-fiction. George RR Martin, creator of *Game of Thrones*, once told me there are two types of writer: the architect and the gardener. The architect is all about structure, control and planning. The story is set early on, like the design of a building, and then it's just a case of executing the plan. The gardener plants a seed, tends to it and just sees what grows. In non-fiction, I'm definitely an architect. It took me a while of working on *Essex Dogs* to find out that, in fiction, I'm a gardener. I love writing fiction. You get to have fun and answer a lot of the questions to which, in non-fiction, the answer is simply: 'we don't really know'.

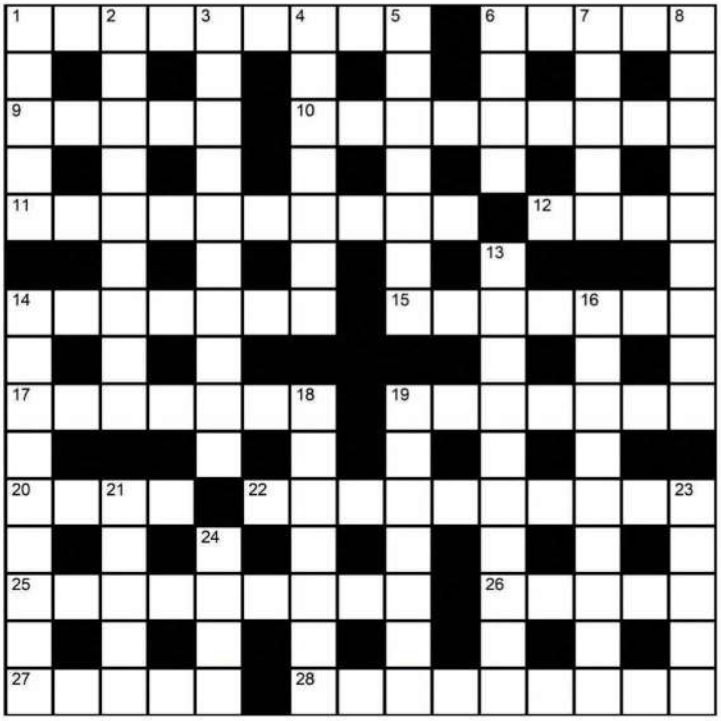
PETER CLARK

# CROSSWORD

TEST YOURSELF WITH OUR HISTORICAL PUZZLE EVERY ISSUE

## CROSSWORD No. 111

**Test your history knowledge to solve our prize puzzle – and you could win a fantastic new book**



Set by Richard Smyth

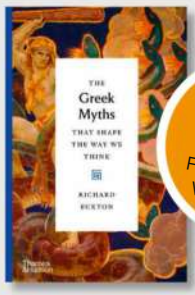
### ACROSS

**1** Trusted officer at a royal court (9)
**6** Walter (1839–94), English essayist and art critic (5)
**9** 1831 opera by Vincenzo Bellini (5)
**10** Historic county of southeast England (9)
**11** Duke of , title of William, third son of George II (10)
**12** "Is there in Gilead?" – Edgar Allan Poe, *The Raven* (1845) (4)
**14** Gebhard Leberecht von (1742–1819), Prussian field marshal (7)
**15** Sea battle between the Greeks and Persians in 480 BC (7)
**17** Queen of Calydon, in Greek myth (7)
**19** Legendary ancestor to the kings of Gwent (7)
**20** Canal, German waterway completed in 1895 (4)
**22** Gus Grissom and Jim Lovell, say (10)
**25** Historic London thoroughfare (3,6)
**26** Turkish city, known in antiquity as Smyrna (5)
**27** Federico García (1898–1936), Spanish poet (5)
**28** Mexican city founded in 1596 by Diego de Montemayor (9)

### DOWN

**1** Diogenes, for example (5)
**2** US film studio founded in 1912 (9)
**3** 1977 surrealist film directed by David Lynch (10)
**4** 'The Manchester ', 1932 protest song by Ewan MacColl (7)
**5** Subdivisions of Yorkshire (7)
**6** battalion, World War I unit of friends, neighbours and workmates (4)
**7** Nikola (1856–1943), Serbian-American inventor (5)
**8** English rock band founded in 1970 (4,5)
**13** Diamond, lost gemstone also known as the Tuscany Diamond (10)
**14** Seaside resort in northwest England (9)
**16** *A Night's Dream*, Shakespeare comedy (9)
**18** Third son of David, in the Old Testament (7)
**19** Bawdy British film comedy franchise of 1958–78 (5,2)
**21** Ruth (1902–77), US pilot known as the 'Miss America of Aviation' (5)
**23** *I'm I Haven't A Clue*, radio panel show launched in 1972 (5)
**24** Priest in Tibetan Buddhism (4)

## CHANCE TO WIN




BOOK WORTH £20 FOR THREE WINNERS

**The Greek Myths That Shape the Way We Think**
by Richard Buxton

### HOW TO ENTER

Post entries to **BBC History Revealed, September 2022 Crossword, PO Box 501, Leicester, LE94 0AA** or email them to **september2022@historyrevealedcomps.co.uk** by noon on **1 October 2022**.

By entering, participants agree to be bound by the terms and conditions shown in the box below. Immediate Media Co Ltd, publishers of *BBC History Revealed*, would love to keep you informed by post or telephone of special offers and promotions from the Immediate Media Co Group. Please write 'Do Not Contact IMC' if you prefer not to receive such information by post or phone. If you would like to receive this information by email, please write your email address on the entry. You may unsubscribe from receiving these messages at any time. For more about the Immediate Privacy Policy, see the box below.
Branded BBC titles are licensed from or published jointly with BBC Studios (the commercial arm of the BBC). Please tick here ☐ if you'd like to receive regular newsletters, special offers and promotions from BBC Studios by email. Your information will be handled in accordance with the BBC Studios privacy policy: *bbcstudios.com/privacy*

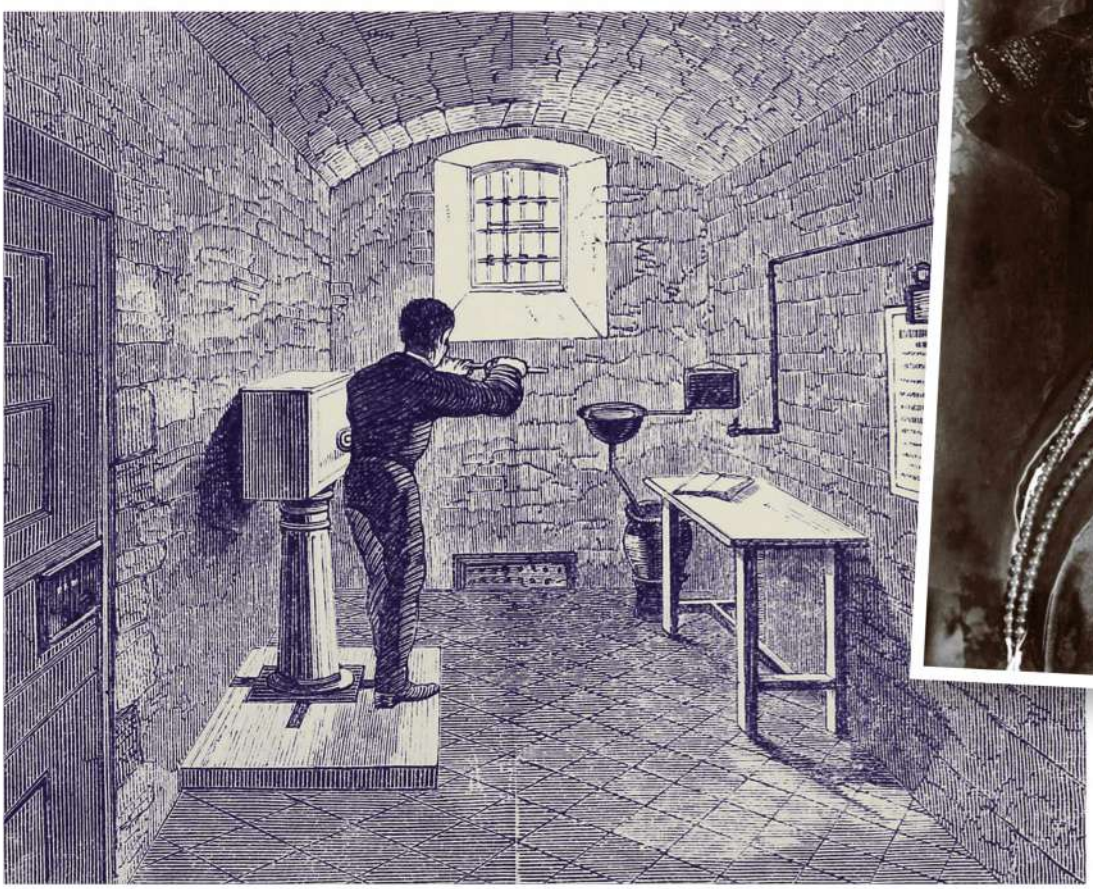
## SOLUTION Nº 109

### CROSSWORD COMPETITION TERMS & CONDITIONS

The competition is open to all UK residents (inc. Channel Islands), aged 18 or over, except Immediate Media Co London Ltd employees or contractors, and anyone connected with the competition or their direct family members. By entering, participants agree to be bound by these terms and conditions and that their name and county may be released if they win. Only one entry per person.

The closing date and time is as shown under **How to Enter**, above. Entries received after that will not be considered. Entries cannot be returned. Entrants must supply full name, address and daytime phone number. Immediate Media Company (publishers of ***BBC History Revealed***) will only ever use personal details for the purposes of administering this competition, and will not publish them or provide them to anyone without permission. Read more about the Immediate Privacy Policy at www.immediatemedia.co.uk/privacy-policy. The winning entrants will be the first correct entries drawn at random after the closing time. The prize and number of winners will be as shown on the Crossword page. There is no cash alternative and the prize will not be transferable. Immediate Media Company London Limited's decision is final and no correspondence relating to the competition will be entered into. The winners will be notified by post within 28 days of the close of the competition. The name and county of residence of the winners will be published in the magazine within two months of the closing date. If the winner is unable to be contacted within one month of the closing date, Immediate Media Company London Limited reserves the right to offer the prize to a runner-up.
Immediate Media Company London Limited reserves the right to amend these terms and conditions or to cancel, alter or amend the promotion at any stage, if deemed necessary in its opinion, or if circumstances arise outside of its control. The promotion is subject to the laws of England. Promoter: Immediate Media Company London Limited

# LETTERS



ABOVE: **Nellie Bly (seen in 1922) did much more than her round-the-world journey**

LEFT: **A mid-19th century illustration of a prisoner turning a hand crank. The machine was how prison guards came to be known as 'screws', says C Bailey**

GETTY IMAGES X2

## TURNING THE SCREW

As a recently retired prison governor, I read with interest your Essential Guide to Crime and Punishment (July 2022) and found it fascinating, particularly the section on the conditions that prisoners endured in the past. I did note the mention of the crank that had to be turned 10,000 times a day as a means of exhausting prisoners. This is, in fact, where the term 'screw' for a prison guard comes from.

Prisoners were required to work in various ways, one of which was to turn a handle attached to a wooden box on a stand roughly at shoulder height. They would need to turn the handle around 3,000 times to earn their breakfast, another 3,000 to earn their lunch, and a total of 10,000 times in the day for their final meal. As the prisoner became used to turning the handle and became quicker at it, the guard would go into the cell and tighten a little screw on the side of the box to make it harder to turn and so the term arose. There is another theory of where it came from, but it is far less interesting: that it was by virtue of the prison keys being known as 'screws', so the guards became screws themselves, or turnkeys.

Cranking the handle served no purpose at all it was just a form of pointless labour for the prisoners. You can still see examples at the old prisons of Beaumaris Gaol in Anglesey and Bodmin Jail in Cornwall, among others.

**C Bailey**, by email

## A WOMAN OF EVEN MORE TALENTS

Your coverage of Louisa Treger's new work of historical fiction, *Madwoman* (August 2022), highlights the bravery of journalist Nellie Bly, who exposed the harsh conditions in a New York lunatic asylum before undertaking her record breaking journey around the world in 72 days. But these are only two of Bly's notable achievements. She was also a pioneer of investigative journalism, campaigning for better jobs for women and a change in the divorce laws, as well as angering factory owners with her reports concerning the conditions endured by some female workers.

She supported a fellow journalist who had been imprisoned for criticising Mexican dictator Porfirio Díaz; covered the first suffragist parade in Washington DC; and sent dispatches back from the Eastern Front during World War I. Later becoming an industrialist, Bly ensured that her company provided exemplary health and recreational benefits for every worker.

**Ian MacDonald**, Essex

## BOTTOMS UP

My dad was in the navy from 1965 to 1978, and I have just read him the short piece on Black Tot Day (Q&A, May 2022), [which stated that, in 1970, when rum rations for sailors were ended, the last rations of the drink were often symbolically buried at sea]. His response was there was no way any sailor would have poured any rum overboard if they had seen it happen, they would have followed it! He also mentioned that you didn't drink it if you were on duty that afternoon, and you shared it out with whoever had done you a favour. The amount you wished to give was determined by specific phrases, including 'sippers', 'gulpers' and 'sandy bottoms'! He said that something left the navy when the rum ration went, and he enjoyed reminiscing about it.

**Lauren Lewis**, by email

## CORRECTIONS

• In the timeline for our Essential Guide to Crime and Punishment (July 2022), we stated that it was Henry II who introduced trial by petty jury in England in 1219. It was, of course, Henry III who did this.

• In our Q&A section for April 2022, we incorrectly stated that John Wilkes Booth was shot at a farm in Maryland. He was, in fact, killed in Virginia.

# NEXT ISSUE

··· ON SALE 1 SEPTEMBER ···

# POMPEII

Discover the fascinating history behind one of the world's most famous ancient cities – from the lives of its residents, to the volcanic eruption of AD 79 and beyond

**PLUS... WOMEN'S HISTORY IN COLOUR** SPOTLIGHT ON J EDGAR HOOVER
**THE SUEZ CANAL CRISIS** HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT DUNKIRK?
**WHAT IF... THE GREAT FIRE OF LONDON HAD NEVER HAPPENED?** AND MORE...

## CROSSWORD WINNERS

The three lucky winners of the prize crossword in issue 108 are as follows:

**B Hare, Wiltshire**
**S Needham, West Yorkshire**
**G Stewart, Lanarkshire**

Congratulations! You've each won a DVD copy of *The Courier*.

We will post your prizes out as soon as possible.

## CONTACT US

facebook.com/HistoryExtra twitter.com/HistoryExtra @HistoryExtra

**EMAIL US:** haveyoursay@historyrevealed.com
**OR POST:** Have Your Say, BBC History Revealed, Immediate Media, Eagle House, Colston Avenue, Bristol, BS1 4ST

## SUBSCRIPTION ENQUIRIES:

**PHONE:** 03330 162 116
**EMAIL VIA:** *www.buysubscriptions.com/contactus*
**OR POST:** BBC History Revealed, PO Box 3320, 3 Queensbridge, Northampton, NN4 7BF
**EDITORIAL ENQUIRIES:** 0117 927 9009

**OVERSEAS:** In the US/Canada you can contact us at:
Immediate Media, PO Box 401, Williamsport, PA 17703, USA
**PHONE:** Toll free 888 941 5623
**EMAIL VIA:** immediatemedia@buysubscriptions.com


BBC HISTORY REVEALED

**ISSUE 111 – SEPTEMBER 2022**
*BBC History Revealed* is published by Immediate Media Company London Limited under licence from BBC Studios who help fund new BBC programmes

**EDITORIAL**
**Editor** Charlotte Hodgman
*charlotte.hodgman@immediate.co.uk*
**Production Editor** Jon Bauckham
**Staff Writer** Emma Slattery Williams
**Content Strategist** Emma Mason
**Digital Editor** Elinor Evans
*elinor.evans@immediate.co.uk*
**Digital Section Editors** Rachel Dinning and Kev Lochun
**Podcast Editor** Ellie Cawthorne

**ART**
**Art Editor** Sheu Kuei Ho
**Picture Editor** Rosie McPherson

**CONTRIBUTORS & EXPERTS**
Rob Blackmore, Michael Cocks, Rhiannon Davies, Matt Elton, Elinor Evans, Annelise Freisenbruch, Amanda Hart, Lola Jaye, Dan Jones, Karen Maitland, Paul Miller Melamed, Spencer Mizen, Lisa Moses, Gordon O'Sullivan, Danny Robins, Rosemary Smith, Richard Smyth, Nige Tassell, Jonny Wilkes, John Jacob Woolf, Barnaby Wright, Jonathan Wright

**PRESS & PR**
**Communications Manager**
Natasha Lee *natasha.lee@immediate.co.uk*

**CIRCULATION**
**Circulation Manager** John Lawton

**ADVERTISING & MARKETING**
**Advertisement Manager**
Sam Jones 0117 300 8145
*sam.jones@immediate.co.uk*
**Senior Brand Sales Executive**
Sam Evanson 0117 300 8544
**Brand Sales Executive**
Sarah Luscombe 0117 300 8530
**Group Direct Marketing Manager**
Laurence Robertson 00353 5787 57444
**Subscriptions Director**
Jacky Perales Morris
**Subscriptions Marketing Manager**
Kevin Slaughter
**Direct Marketing Manager**
Aisha Babb
**US Representative**
Kate Buckley *buckley@buckleypell.com*

**PRODUCTION**
**Production Director** Sarah Powell
**Production Coordinator** Lizzie Ayre
**Ad Coordinator** Bryony Grace
**Ad Designer** Julia Young

**PUBLISHING**
**Content Director** David Musgrove
**Commercial Director** Jemima Dixon
**CEO** Sean Cornwell
**CFO & COO** Dan Constanda
**Executive Chairman** Tom Bureau

**BBC STUDIOS, UK PUBLISHING**
**Chair, Editorial Review Boards**
Nicholas Brett
**Managing Director, Consumer Products and Licensing** Stephen Davies
**Director, Magazines and Consumer Products** Mandy Thwaites
**Compliance Manager**
Cameron McEwan *uk.publishing@bbc.com*

**Basic annual subscription rates**
**UK** £64.87 **Eire/Europe** £67.99
**ROW** £69.00

IMMEDIATE MEDIA Co



© **Immediate Media Company London Limited.**
All rights reserved. No part of *BBC History Revealed* may be reproduced in any form or by any means either wholly or in part, without prior written permission of the publisher. Not to be resold, lent, hired out or otherwise disposed of by way of trade at more than the recommended retail price or in mutilated condition. Printed in the UK by William Gibbons Ltd. The publisher, editor and authors accept no responsibility in respect of any products, goods or services which may be advertised or referred to in this issue or for any errors, omissions, misstatements or mistakes in any

recycle ipso Regulated

GETTY IMAGES

# PHOTO FINISH

ARRESTING IMAGES FROM THE ANNALS OF THE PAST

## ON THE SHOULDERS OF ALLIES 1945

The date is 15 August 1945: Victory over Japan Day (or VJ Day), when the Japanese surrender finally ends World War II. In London, the news is met with jubilant celebrations, with Piccadilly Circus especially packed with revellers, both civilian and military, dancing and singing as ticker tape and streamers rain down from the windows. Here, a band of American troops hoist a member of the Chinese Military Mission in the British capital on their shoulders. It is a small act of recognition for the role played by one of the Allies so often overlooked. For the Chinese, the war had started two years before Hitler invaded Poland, and another two before Pearl Harbor, but they had stood against the might of Japan from 1937 to 1945 and endured.

GETTY IMAGES

# DISCOVER THE WHOLE PICTURE

When you explore your family tree, you find names, dates and places. But it's the extra details that truly reveal your family story.

Ancestry has a huge range of historical records, and with an average of two million added every day, there's always more to discover. So even when you think you know your family, they can keep surprising you.

ancestry®
Bring your backstory to life™

**Do you have a fascinating family story to share?**

We'd love to hear about your discoveries, email us at *yourstory@ancestry.co.uk*

**August Record Highlights***

Calvados, France Births, Marriages and Deaths, 1697-1912 - **NEW**

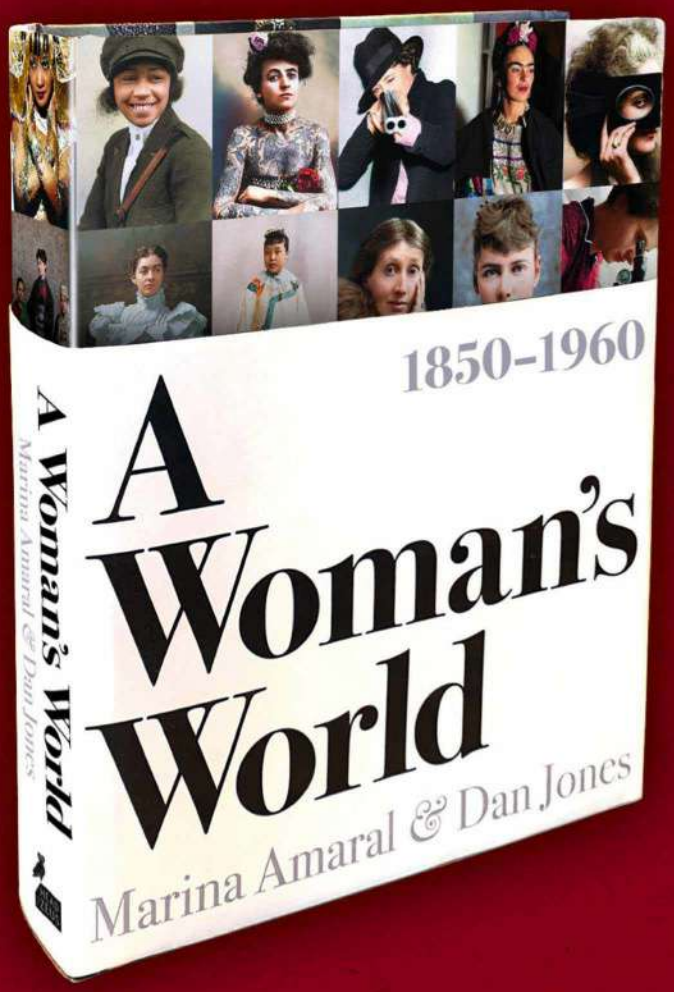
U.S., Carded Birth Records in Military Hospitals, 1884-1916 – **NEW**

West Virginia, U.S., Federal Naturalization Records, 1844-1943 – **UPDATE**

*Record collections subject to change.

FROM THE AUTHORS OF THE BESTSELLING *THE COLOUR OF TIME* SERIES

# DAN JONES & MARINA AMARAL




Non-Fiction | 04/03/2022 | 9781800240247 | £30

**This book explores the many roles – domestic, social, cultural and professional – played by women across the world before second-wave feminism took hold.**

**Using Marina Amaral's colourized images and Dan Jones's words, this vivid and unique history brings to life and full colour the female experience in a century of extraordinary change.**

## OUT NOW IN HARDBACK

HEAD of ZEUS